AN INTRODUCTION

TO

the study of

INDIAN HISTORY

by

DAMODAR DHARMANAND KOSAMBI



POPULAR BOOK DEPOT
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TAXILA
HARAPPA
DELHI
MOHENJO DARO
SRAVASTI
ALLAHABAD
KOSAM
BENARES
PATNA
RAJGIR
UJJAIN
NASIK
Tapti
THANA
PAITHAN
POONA
BIJAPUR
Kistna
MYSORE
Ganges
Brahmaputra
CONTOURS
OVER 3000'
1000' - 3000'
0' - 1000'

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to

Dr. Mrs. MONICA FELTON

whose critical advice

has imposed

heavy obligations

upon

both reader

and author.

CONTENTS

PREFACE

THIS book does not pretend to be a history of India. It is merely a modern approach to the study of Indian history, written in the hope that readers may be impelled to study that history for themselves, or at least be enabled to look at the country with greater sympathy and understanding. To this end, the examples given have been intensive rather than extensive, from my own (necessarily restricted) experience and reading. They are the simplest examples, such as anyone could derive from honest field-work, though each of them illustrates some general point. Better illustrations may undoubtedly be found by the reader from the lives and manners of his own neighbours, and the remains of antiquity in his particular locality. Going over to the common people is not easy work. Psychological barriers raised by many generations of the grimmest poverty and exploitation are strengthened by the heat, dust or mud, and unhygienic conditions. But, properly done, the task can nevertheless be exhilarating even for one whose patience has worn thin and whose joints have stiffened painfully with age. Such field-work has to be performed with critical insight, taking nothing for granted, or on faith, but without the attitude of superiority, sentimental reformism, or spurious leadership which prevents most of us from learning anything except from bad textbooks.

The subtle mystic philosophies, tortuous religions, ornate literature, monuments teeming with intricate sculpture, and delicate music of India all derive from the same historical process that produced the famished apathy of the villager, senseless opportunism and termite greed of the 'cultured' strata, sullen un-coordinated discontent among the workers, the general demoralisation, misery, squalor, and degrading superstition. The one is a result of the other, the one is the expression of the other. The most primitive implements

produced a meagre surplus which was expropriated by a correspondingly archaic social mechanism. This maintained a few in that cultured leisure which they took as a mark of their innate superiority to the vast majority living in degradation. It is necessary to grasp this in order to appreciate the fact that history is not a sequence of haphazard events but is made by human beings in the satisfaction of their daily needs. To be more attractive, history must reflect man's progress at satisfying his needs in cooperation with all his fellow men, not the success of a few at satisfying them at the expense of most of their fellow men. The supposed achievements of other countries have been paid for by their down-at-heel 'ragged-trousered philanthropists'. In India, their counterparts have not achieved so much as trousers or shoes for themselves.

To maintain that history has always been made by such backward, ignorant, common people, and that they, not the high priest, glittering autocrat, war-lord, financier, or demagogue, must shape it better in future, seems presumptuous formalism. Nevertheless, it is true. The proper study of history in a class society means analysis of the differences between the interests of the classes on top and of the rest of the people; it means consideration of the extent to which an emergent class had something new to contribute during its rise to power, and of the stage where it turned (or will turn) to reaction in order to preserve its vested interests.

Some readers will insist that man does not live by bread alone, that history and society both depend upon the individual's mastery of his eternal soul, that materialism destroys all human values. Unfortunately, man cannot exist without bread or the equivalent, which is necessary to keep the soul (if he can afford one) in his body. An aggregate of human beings constitutes a society when, and only when, the people are in some way interrelated. The essential relation is not kinship, but much wider; namely, that developed through production and mutual exchange of commodities. The particular society is characterized by what it regards as necessary; who gathers or produces the things, by what implements; who lives off the production of others, and by what right, divine or legal—cults and laws are social byproducts; who owns the tools, the land, sometimes the body and soul of the producer. *Society is held together by bonds of production.* Far from destroying human values, materialism shows how they are related to contemporary

social conditions, and to the prevalent concept of value. Like value, language itself (without which the idealist cannot even conceive of his soul) arose from material exchange relations which led to the exchange of ideas. The philosophic individual cannot reshape a mechanised world nearer to heart's desire by the "eternal" ideologies developed over two thousand years ago in a bullock-cart country.

The class that rules India today, the paramount power, is the Indian bourgeoisie. This class has some peculiar characteristics, due primarily to the course of history. The Indian bourgeoisie is technically backward. Its production (and mentality) is overwhelmingly that of a petty bourgeoisie as yet. Its government has a unique position as by far the greatest owner of capital assets, and a monopolist wherever it chooses to be. This seemingly absolute power is under compulsion of reconciling the real needs of the country, and its professed socialist goal, with the rapacity of both petty-bourgeois and tycoon sections of the ruling class. Finally, this class came to power too late, in a world where the international bourgeois failure and crisis had already manifested itself. An eleventh chapter commenting on these points and their probable effect on future historical developments had reluctantly to be deleted.

Official figures give the following daily food requirements per Indian adult, in ounces (bracketed figures give the quantity actually available) : Cereals 14(13.71) ; pulses 3(2.1) ; milk 10(5.5) ; fruits 3(1.5) ; vegetables 10(1.3) ; sugar 2(1.6) ; fish and meat 3(0.3) ; eggs (number) 1 (-) ; vegetable oils and ghee 2 (1). (*INDIA* 1954, p. 295 ; 1955, p. 413 ; not found in 1956). Recent official declarations state that Indian food consumption continues to decline. This grim tale of a diet so miserably deficient in every single particular is made still more tragic by the fact that it is a rare Indian who can afford to buy even the food assigned to him by the statistical averages. The question is, whether this situation of a populace doomed to hunger and disease is permanent, or whether Indian society is about to rid itself of such basic evils. How long can any country remain a democracy with this little sustenance for the average man? The answer has to be worked out by correct thinking, for which the study of history is quite indispensable. But the solution has then to be made a reality by correct action, which means a step beyond mere study of the past. Control over history is not to be

attained by the passive suffering that has perpetuated Indian life from generation to generation. The time has now come to make history, to a seriously thought-out, conscious design in order to preserve the peace of Asia and of the world.

To come to technical matters: The use of the first person singular means that the statement is made on the writer's personal responsibility; 'we' invites the reader's cooperation, generally in some bit of reasoning. The reader with insufficient previous knowledge of conventional history should not neglect to acquire it from some of the books cited in the first note to the first chapter. In names and words from Indian languages, the usual system of Romanization (where *c* is always pronounced as the palatal *ch*) has been followed, but not consistently because many of the words are already familiar with spellings that would have to be altered beyond recognition. The reader will have to accustom himself to variations in orthography; Rājagṛha in Sanskrit is Rājgir in Hindi. Published translations have been used even when I happened to know the original language, but with such emendation as seemed necessary. The danger lies in the tendency of translators to read their own prejudices into the text. Thus, some discover feudal vassals in the *Ṛgveda* and the *Arthaśāstra*, which would give a completely different picture of the society, with fatal consequences to any historical method. The one indispensable warning is against direct rationalization of myth, called Euhemerism after the Greek who tried it with the myths current among his own people. The true content of a myth is difficult to obtain, and rarely direct historical information. Indian historical figures and events tend unfortunately to disappear into misty legend which comes more and more to resemble pure myth with the passage of time.

I hereby express my gratitude to all those who encouraged and helped me during the preparation of this book.

D. D. Kosambi

Deccan Queen
December 7, 1956

ABBREVIATIONS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

AB — *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa;* translation by A. B. Keith, in *HOS* 25.

ABIA — Annual Bibliography of Indian Archaeology (Leiden).

ABORI — Annals of the Bhāṇḍārkar Oriental Research Institute (Poona).

AI — Ancient India (Archaeological Dept. Publication, nos. 1-11).

Alb — *Albirūnī's India* trans. Ed. Sachau, 2 vol. London 1910; 2 vol. in one. London 1914. Albirūnī was a Khwarizmian (973-1048 A.D.); this work was written about 1030 A.D.

Arth. — The *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭalya (otherwise known as Cāṇakya, Viṣṇugupta, and Kauṭilya). Ed. T. Gaṇapati Śāstri, *TSS.* 79, 80, 82. Also, 2nd ed. (text) R. Shāma Śāstry, Mysore 1924; the same scholar's word index to *Arth.* (3 vol., Mysore 1925) is indispensable, but his English translation (3rd ed., Mysore 1929) leaves much to be desired. The best available translation, though not to be used uncritically, is still that of J. J. Meyer: "Das altindische Buch vom Welt- und Staatsleben, Das Arthaśāstra des Kauṭilya" (Leipzig 1926). cf. also Meyer's "Ueber das Wesen der altindischen Rechtsschriften und ihr Verhältnis zu einander und zu Kauṭilya" (Leipzig 1927) : valuable analysis, without an index. The Marāṭhī translation of *Arth.* by J. S. Karandikar and B. R. Hivargāokar (2 vol, Karjat 1927-9) cannot be recommended.

ASWI — Archaeological Survey of Western India; particularly, vol. IV (1876-9) where the caves used in the present work are described, though not too well, even with the supplementary aid of Burgess's *Buddhist Cave Temples.*

AV — The *Atharva-veda,* mostly from W. D. Whitney's translation, *HOS.* 7-8; also the selections translated by M. Bloomfield, *SBE* 42.

BASOR — Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research.

Bat. — "Selections from the travels of Ibn Battūta (1325-1354)", trans. H. A. R. Gibb (London 1929, reprinted 1939; "The Broadway Travellers").

Beal — *Ta-Tang-Si-Yu-Ki: Buddhist records of the western world*, translated from the Chinese of Hiuen Tsang (A.D. 629) by Samuel Beal; 2nd vol., London 1884; the introductory portion contains a translation of Fa Hian's travels, and other documents.

BEFEO — Bulletin de l'École Française de l'extrême Orient.

BJ — Francis Buchanan: "A Journey from Madras through the countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar performed under the orders of the Most Noble the Marquis of Wellesley, Governor General of India for the express purpose of investigating the state of Agriculture, Arts, and Commerce, the Religion, Manners and Customs, the History Natural and Civil, and antiquities, in the dominion of the Rajah of Mysore and the countries acquired by the Honourable East India Company in the late and former wars, from Tippoo Sultaun" (3 vol. London 1807; 2nd ed. in 2 vol., Madras 1870).

B-P. — B. H. Baden-Powell: *The land-systems of British India* (3 vol. Oxford 1892). The work is a handy digest of the Settlement Reports, most of which are not available to the ordinary reader, though the unsubstantiated theorizing about history and races should be ignored. The same author's *Manual* (of the Land Revenue System and Land Tenure of British India, Calcutta 1882) abbreviates the facts without cutting down the theories.

BPL — George A. Grierson: *Bihār Peasant Life* 2nd ed. Patna 1926.

Brough — J. Brough: "The early brahmanical system of gotra and pravara" (a translation of the *gotra-pravara-mañjarī* of a medieval author, Puruṣottama). Cambridge, 1953.

BrUp. — *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.

BSOAS — Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies (of the University of London).

CAI — *The Cambridge History of India*, vol. I, "Ancient India", ed. E. J. Rapson, Cambridge 1922, 1935.

ChUp. — *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*.

Crooke — W. Crooke: "Rural and agricultural glossary for the N. W. Provinces and Oude (=U.P.)" (Calcutta 1888).

Cullavagga — *SBE*. 20

DB — "The book of Duarte Barbosa" (1500-1517; from the Portuguese text, Lisboa 1812), trans. M. L. Dames (London 1918, Hakluyt Society no. 44).

DHI — Louis de la Vallée Poussin: "Dynasties et histoire de l'Inde depuis Kaniṣka jusqu'aux invasions musulmanes" (Paris 1935).

DKA — F. E. Pargiter: "The Purāṇa text of the Dynasties of the Kali Age" (Oxford 1913); synoptic text and translation of the historical portion of the purāṇas, still standard. For a general critical analysis of the purāṇas, see R. C. Hazra:

"Studies in the Purāṇic records on Hindu rites and customs", Dacca, 1940.

DN — *Digha-Nikāya* (Pali Text Society's edition).

DR — A. Shakespeare : "Selections from the Duncan Records" (Benares 1873, 2 vol.). With this should be read the "Selections from the revenue records North West Provinces" (Allahabad 1873).

ED — H. M. Elliot (ed. J. Dowson) : "The history of India by its own historians; the Muhammadan period" (8 vol. London 1867+).

EI — *Epigraphia Indica* (publication of the Archaeological Dept., for Indian inscriptions).

Fer. — J. Briggs's translation of Md. Kasim Ferishta's "History of the rise of the Mohammadan power in India till the year A.D. 1612" ; original edition, London 1829 ; edition used, 4 vol. Calcutta 1908-10.

Fick — R. Fick : "Die sociale Gliederung im nordöstlichen Indien zu Buddhas Zeit mit besonderer Rücksichtigung der Kastenfrage vornehmlich auf Grund der Jātaka dargestellt". (Kiel, 1897).

Fleet — J. F. Fleet : "Inscriptions of the early Gupta kings and their successors" (*Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum* III, Calcutta 1888). A revision has been announced, but not yet published, nor the supplementary volume of Sātavāhana and other epigraphs.

FOM — *Oriental Memoirs*; a narrative of seventeen years residence in India by James Forbes Esq. F.R.S. ; 2nd edition revised by his daughter the countess of Montalembert. 2 vol. London 1874. Forbes arrived in Bombay as Writer to the government in 1766 and sailed for home in 1784.

Har. — The *Harṣacaritam* of Bāṇa; Sanskrit text, with commentary of *Saṃkarakavi*, Bombay, 7th ed. (*Nirṇaysāgar*) 1946; I have had the still unpublished commentary of Raṅganātha (Madras Govt. *MSS.* collection R. 2703) copied out for my use. The English translation by E. B. Cowell and F. W. Thomas (London 1897, reprinted 1929; Royal Asiatic Society, Oriental Trans. Fund), is useful, as is the (sometimes rather uncritical) analysis and comment in Hindi by V. S. Agrawāla (*Harṣacarita, eka sāṃskṛtika adhyayana*, Patna 1953).

HOS — Harvard Oriental Series (Harvard University Press, Cambridge Mass. USA).

IA — Indian Antiquary.

IAR — *Indian Archaeology, a Review*; begun 1953-4, with a second number for 1954-5, apparently not for sale to the general public, but a valuable survey of recent archaeological work.

IG — Imperial Gazetteer of India (new edition) 26 vol., Oxford 1907-9. With this should be taken the various provincial gazet-

teers of which little use has been made in this work as they are all sadly out of date, but many of which (*e.g.* Gazetteer of the Central Provinces of India; ed. Charles Grant, Nagpur 1870) contain valuable information about tribal life of the period.

IHQ Indian Historical Quarterly.

INDIA Annual published since 1953 by the Publication division of the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, New Delhi; compiled by its Research and Reference section. This gives the statistics and general information of interest for the whole country.

ITM L. de la Vallée Poussin: "L'Inde aux temps des Mauryas et des barbares, Grecs, Scythes, Parthes et Yue-Tchi" (Paris 1930).

JA Journal Asiatique.

JAOS Journal of the American Oriental Society.

JASB Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (three series, the society having once been changed into the 'Royal Asiatic Society', and afterwards merely the 'Asiatic Society'). The numismatic supplements to the middle series are paged separately.

Jāt. Pāli text in Roman ed. V. Fausböll "The Jātaka together with its commentary, being tales of the anterior births of Gotama Buddha": 7 vol. London 1877-97. The English translation by various scholars is far less competent than the German by Julius Dutoit: "Jātakam — Das Buch der Erzählungen aus früheren Existenzen Buddhas" (7 vol. München 1906-1921).

JBBRAS Journal of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.

JBORS Journal of the Bihār and Orissa Research Society (now only the Bihār Research Society).

JNSI Journal of the Numismatic Society of India.

JOR Journal of Oriental Research, Madras (from the Kuppuswami Sastri Research Institute, Mylapore, Madras).

JRAS Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of London.

Kern *Der Buddhismus und seine Geschichte in Indien*; translated into German from the Dutch of Henrik Kern by H. Jacobi; 2 vol. Leipzig 1882, 1884. Treats of the Buddha as a myth, but with good presentation of the canonical source material.

KSS The *Kathā-sarit-sāgara* of Somadeva-bhaṭṭa; Sanskrit text, 4th ed. (Nirṇaysāgar) Bombay 1930; the excellent translation by C. H. Tawney, edited with explanatory notes, appendices, and index, by N. M. Penzer as "The Ocean of Story", 10 vol. London 1924 ff. is indispensable for finding anything.

Lüders H. Lüders: "List of Brāhmi inscriptions from the earliest times to about A.D. 400 with the exception of those of Asoka", Appendix to *EI* vol. 10. D. R. Bhandarkar's list in *EI* 19-20 revised that of Kielhorn in *EI* 5 and 8; both are much less

useful than those of Lüders. A general list seems to be under publication by the Department of Archaeology.

Mahāvagga *SBE.* 13, 17.

Mbh. The *Mahābhārata*, for the first time critically edited by Viṣṇu S. Sukṭhaṇkar (with the cooperation of many others). Poona 1933; the work is still being carried on, though less competently after Sukthankar's death in 1943. For finding the relevant material quickly, those who (like me) read Sanskrit far more slowly than English would be helped by P. C. Roy's English translation (continuously reprinted since the first edition in the 1880's) of the inflated vulgate text.

Meg. J. W. McCrindle: "Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian" (Calcutta 1926, badly reprinted from *IA* 1876-77). The text was published as selections of the quotations or reports of Megasthenes which survive in Strabo, Diodorus Siculus, and others by E. A. Schwanbeck, Bonn 1946. For Diodoros, I have used the edition by Dindorf and Latin translation of Carl Müller, Paris 1878.

MEI Montgomery Martin: "The history, antiquities, topography and statistics of EASTERN INDIA, comprising the districts of Behar, Shahabad, Bhagalpoor, Goruckpoor, Dinajpoor, Puraniya, Rungpoor, and Assam, in relation to their geology, mineralogy, botany, agriculture, commerce, manufactures, fine arts, population, religion, education, statistics &c., surveyed under the orders of the supreme government and collated from the original documents at the E.I. House, with the permission of the honourable court of directors" (3 vol. London 1838). This is a trimmed copy of Francis Buchanan's reports. The reader would not be able to guess that the original work was by Buchanan. The original reports pertaining to Bihar districts have later been published by the Bihar and Orissa Research Society, under Buchanan's name.

MN *Majjhima Nikāya*

Mor. W. H. Moreland: (A) "The agrarian system of Moslem India" (Cambridge 1929). (B) "India at the death of Akbar" (London 1920). (C) "From Akbar to Aurangzeb" (London 1923).

MP *Milindapañho*; Pāli text ed. R. D. Vāḍekar (Bombay 1940) English translation *SBE* 35, 36.

Ms. *Manusmṛti*, Sanskrit text with commentary of Kullūka, Bombay (Nirṇaysāgar, 9th ed.) 1933; with the commentary of Medhātithi, ed. Gaṅgānāth Jhā, 3 vol. Calcutta 1932-39 (Bibliotheca Indica 1516, 1522, 1533). English translation by G. Bühler, *SBE* 25.

NDG George A. Grierson: "Notes on the district of Gayā" (Calcutta 1893).

PE Asoka's Pillar edicts by number, as edited in the Corpus Ins-

criptionum Indicarum (with English translation) vol. I, new edition by E. Hultzsch (Oxford, 1925).

Rāj. " Kalhaṇa's *Rājataraṅgiṇī*, a chronicle of the kings of Kaśmīr " trans. M. A. Stein, 2 vol. London 1900; most useful for its notes, without which the Sanskrit texts edited by Stein, Durgā Prasād, and others would be incomprehensible.

RE. Asoka's Rock Edicts by number, text and translation as for *PE.*

RV The *Ṛgveda*; text with commentary of Sāyaṇa, 4 vol., Poona 1933-46. Used therewith, Grassmann's *Wörterbuch zum RV*, and the German translation by A. Ludwig, 6 vol. Prag. 1876-88.

ŚB. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*; mostly, from the translation of Julius Eggeling, *SBE*, 12, 26, 41, 43, 44.

SBE " Sacred Books of the East ". A series of English translations by various scholars, under the general editorship of F. Max Müller, published at Oxford, mostly in the last twenty years of the 19th century.

Schoff W. H. Schoff trans: " Periplus of the Erythraean sea, travel and trade in Indian Ocean by a merchant of the first century " (New York 1912). The text is from the edition of C. Müller *Geographici Graeci Minores*, Paris 1855 and B. Fabricius, Leipzig 1883. Schoff's dating of the original to 60 A.D. may not be acceptable if the king Mambanus, presumably a corrupt reading for Nambanus, is taken as Nahapāna, but it would be difficult to date the work beyond 90 A.D. See also W. McCrindle, *IA.* 8. 108-151

Strabo The text and translation of his Geography, particularly the XVth book, by H. L. Jones in the Classics have been consulted. Translations quoted here are mostly those by J. W. McCrindle in *Meg.* and in " Ancient India as described in classical literature " (London 1901), the last of McCrindle's six volumes of sources in translation. That volume also contains excerpts from Pliny, Kosmas Indikopleustes and others.

Tar. Anton Schiefner: " Tāranathas Geschichte des Buddhismus in Indien aus dem Tibetischen übersetzt " St. Peterburg 1869.

TS. A. B. Keith (Trans.) " Veda of the Black Yajus School ", *HOS* 18-19.

TSS Trivāndrum Sanskrit Series.

Var. " The itinerary of Ludovico Varthema of Bologna " from 1502 to 1508; trans. J. W. Jones, 1863; special edition, London 1928.

Yule " Cathay and the way thither " by H. Yule, 2nd. ed. H. Cordier, 3 vol. London 1913-5 (Hakluyt Society nos. 38, 33, 37).

ZDMG Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft.

CHRONOLOGICAL OUTLINE

No chronology is involved in the first two chapters.

Chap. III : Foundation of the Indus cities, *circa* 3000 B.C., say during the Jemdet-Nasr period in Mesopotamia (*cf.* fig. 6). Hammurabi's dates are taken as 1728-1686 B.C.

Chap. IV : First Aryan invasion, *circa* 1750 B.C. Main Ṛgvedic period about 1500 B.C. Second Aryan wave *circa* 1100 B.C.

Chap. V : The Yajurveda completed by 800 B.C. Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa by 600 B.C., not counting occasional later interpolations in each.

Chap. VI : Silver coinage regularly used in Kosala and Magadha by 7th century B.C. Death of the Buddha and Pasenadi (both at the age of 80) about 483 B.C. Mahāvīra died a few years after the Buddha, perhaps about 468 B.C. Bimbisāra of Magadha began to rule about 540 B.C., Ajātaśatru in 492, Mahāpadma Nanda before 350.

Chap. VII : Alexander's invasion of India began late in 327 B.C., retreat from the Beās July 326 B.C.; death in Babylon 323 B.C. Mauryan emperors from Candragupta about 321-184 B.C. Asoka, *circa* 275-232 B.C. The contemporary Yavana kings mentioned in Asokan edicts are : Antiochos II Theos (Syria, 261-246); Ptolemy Philadelphos (Egypt, 258-247); Antigonos Gonatas (Macedon, 278-242 or 239); Magas (Cyrene, d. 258); Alexander of Epirus, about 272-258 B.C.

Chap. VIII : First Sātavāhanas *circa* 200 B.C. Rudradāman's Girnār inscription, 150 A.D. Indian raid of Antiochos III of Syria, 206 B.C. Indo-Greek princes, 200-58 B.C. Of these, the house of Euthydemos ruled the Kābūl valley, with shifting portions of Bactria and India; Eukratides and his descendants, 165-25 B.C. Śaka-Pahlava rule over the Punjab, 75 B.C. —50 A.D. The foundation of the Kuṣāṇa empire by Kaniṣka started the era of 78 A.D. The last Kuṣāṇa emperor Vāsudeva ruled about 200 A.D., but the title *devaputra* of this dynasty (from the Chinese 'Son of Heaven') was claimed by some enemies of the Guptas as late as the 4th century, and it is possible that descendants continued to rule at Kābūl till the end of the 8th century.

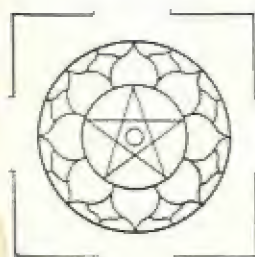
Chap. IX : Gupta era founded 319-20 A.D. by the first emperor Candragupta I ; his father Ghaṭotkaca and grandfather Śrīgupta were local chieftains, in the Fyzābād-Prayāg region. The major successors took the throne approximately as follows : Samudragupta, 330 A.D. ; Candragupta II, 380 ; Kumāragupta I, 415 ; Skandagupta, 455 ; Budhagupta ruled in the north till about 515. The Valabhī dynasty was founded by Bhaṭārka in 480, and lasted till 700 A.D. The Huns Tormāṇa and Mihiragula held sway over Mālwā from about 500 to 528 A.D. Harṣa, say 605-6 to 647 A.D. Harṣa's enemy Narendragupta-Śaśāṅka was the last of the northern Guptas. The visit of Fa Hian to India covers 405 ; Hiuen Tsang, about 629-645 A.D. The Kaḍamba king Mayūraśarman is now placed late in the 4th century.

Chap. X : Marco Polo visited south India twice, in 1288 and 1292-3 A.D. The greatest known Chinese flotillas were led into Indian waters by the Ming admiral Cheng Ho, between the years 1405 and 1433 A.D. The last four voyages went as far as Ormuz on the African coast. (*cf. China Reconstructs* 5.7, July 1956, pp. 11-14). The first Muslim (Arab) raids seem to have begun from about 637. The steady reduction of territory for permanent occupation began with Muhammad ibn Al-Kāsim's victory over Dāhir in 712 A.D., whereby Multān and the whole of the lower Indus valley was brought under the Muslims. Mahmūd of Ghāzni (died 1030 A.D.) extinguished in successive raids the Śāhiya dynasty of Udabhāṇḍa (Und), and the Pratihāras of Kanauj. The Gurjara-Pratihāra (Parihāra) kingdom was founded about 725 A.D. by one Nāgabhaṭa, who later took Kanauj (which remained the capital), and ended with Rājyapāla who was killed in 1020, after the defeat by Mahmūd. The Pālas of Bihār and west Bengal began with a local chieftain Gopāla about 750, and petered out in 1175, though the family survived till 1500 at least. The Senas superseded them over most of their territory from about 1108 to Muhammad bin Bakhtyār Khalji's raid at the end of the century. The Candel kings, who started as aboriginal (Goṇḍ) chiefs founded their own kingdom after a defeat of the Pratihāras in the 9th century and ruled over Bundelkhand (Jejākabhukti) till the end of the 12th century. The Gāhaḍavāla (Raṭhor) kings succeeded to the throne of Kanauj with Candradeva in 1090, and were wiped out in 1194 by Muhammad Ghūrī, who had also defeated the Cauhān (Cāhamāna) king Pṛthvī Rāja a year or so earlier. In the peninsula, the Cālukyas began with Pulikeśin I at Badāmi, about 550 A.D., and were overthrown in 757 by the Rāṣṭrakūṭas, who defeated Kirtivarman. The eastern Cālukyas continued till 1070, when Rajendra III Coḷa (Kulottuṅga) united the two crowns as descendant of both houses. The first prominent Rāṣṭrakūṭa, Kṛṣṇa I, ruled 768-772, the fourth known chief of his line. The line ended in 982. The Cālukyas of Kalyāṇī lasted from 696 to 1200. The Pallavas from the fourth century to the late ninth. The Coḷas from 846 to 1279.

The Muslim 'slave' dynasty of Delhi began with Kutb-ud-dīn Aibak, slave of Muhammad Ghūrī, in 1206, ending in 1290. The Khaljī sultanate

succeeded, 1290-1320 (Alā'uddīn, 1296-1316); Tughluqs, 1320-1413 (Firuz 1351-1388). Sayyids, 1414-1451; Lodis 1451-1526; Mughāls 1526-1858, but shadow emperors after Aurangzeb (1658-1707). The Bāhamani dynasty (mostly at Gulbarga) of the Deccan: 1347-1526; but in 1518, five separate provincial governors set up independent kingdoms. The most important of these was the Adil-śāhī house of Bijāpur, which terminated with defeat at the hands of Aurangzeb in 1686. The Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar, which was founded in 1336, was destroyed by a confederacy of four of the five Deccan Muslim kingdoms after the battle of Talikoṭa, Jan. 26, 1565, though descendants survived as local chiefs.

THE MAKING OF HISTORY







4. Compaction & expansion
5. Banāras potter

2. Disc in use
3. Potter's wheel, Poona





1. Potter's Disc



6. Rouletted ware, Arikamedu



7. Sātavāhana jug





8. Indus "Gilgamesh"



9. Indus "Enkidu"



10. Persian Wheel



11. Indus humped bull



12. Pālkhi bull, Ālandi

15. Gandhāran plough



16. Late Kuṣāṇa ploughman



13. Sāṇḍa bull, Banāras



14. Water-buffalo, Poona

17. Harrow ploughing

18. Kabir weaving





19. Tanner's lime-pit

20. Brown-sugar manufacture



21. Village hut, Ambarnāth



23. Famine in Bihār

25. Sindri Fertiliser Factory





22. Māṅg slum hut



24. Making Cow-dung Fuel

26. Bhākrā-Nangal Hydēl Channel





27. (*a*) Punch-marked coin



27. (*b*) Punch-marked coin



28. (*a*) Peukelaotis



28. (*b*) Peukelaotis



29. (*a*) Menander



29. (*b*) Menander



30. (*a*) Apollodotos



30. (*b*) Apollodotos



31. (*a*) Nahapāna



31. (*b*) Nahapāna



32. (*a*) Sātakaṇi



32. (*b*) Sātakaṇi



33. (*a*) Yaudheya



33. (*b*) Yaudheya



34. (*a*) Udumbara



34. (*b*) Udumbara



35. (*a*) Candragupta-Kumāradevi



35. (*b*) Candragupta-Kumāradevi



36. (*a*) Kumâragupta



36. (*b*) Kumâragupta



37. (*a*) Śrī-Ha



37. (*b*) Śrī-Ha



38. (*a*) Sâmantadeva



38. (*b*) Sâmantadeva



39. (*a*) Mahmūd Ghazni



39. (*b*) Mahmūd Ghazni



40. (*a*) Akbar (Rāma-Sītā)



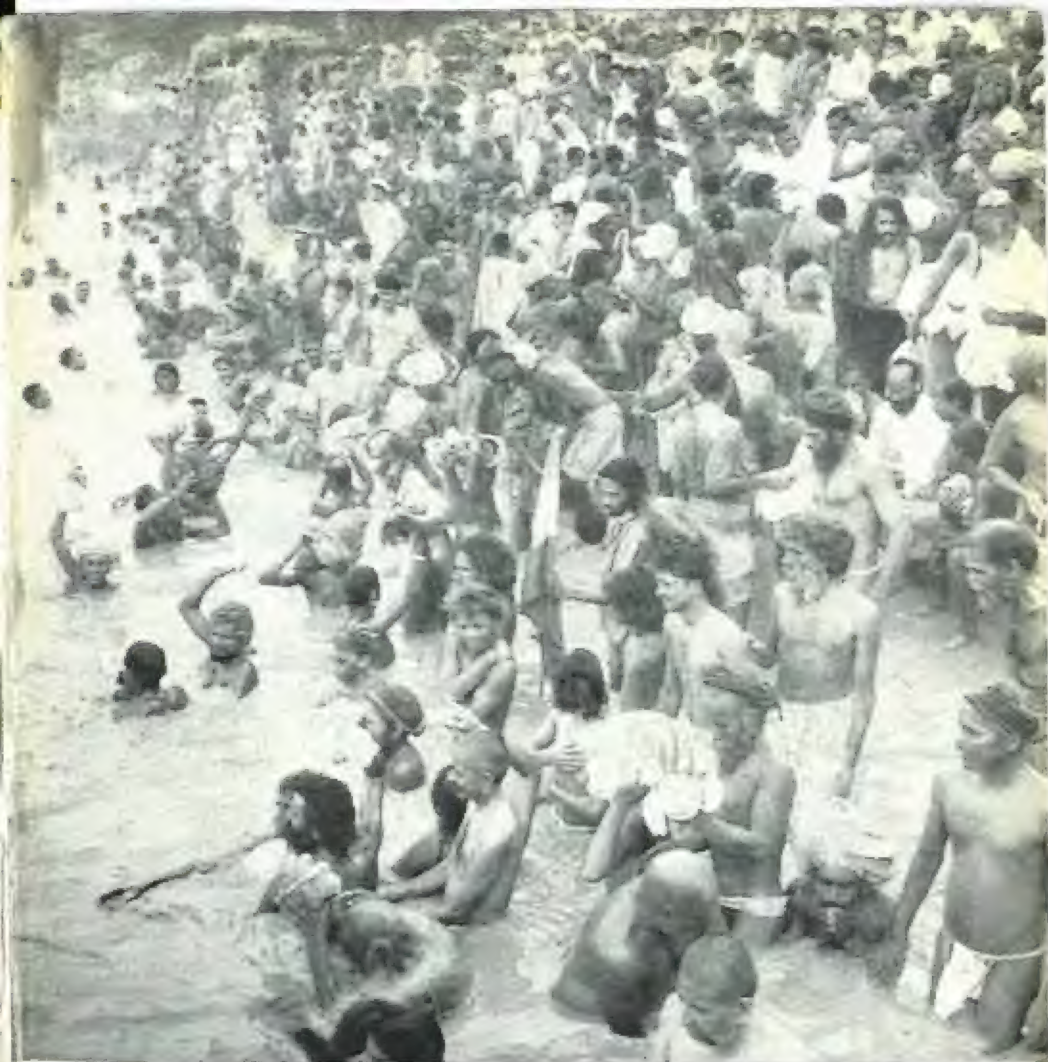
40. (*b*) Akbar (Rāma-Sītā)



41. (*a*) Jahāngir



41. (*b*) Jahāngir



42.
Ritual
bathing
at
an eclipse,
Kuruksetra



43. Main Stūpa at Sanchi, (originally known as Kakināda-bota) as restored by Modern Archaeologists

44. Ruins of the "Great Bath" at Mohenjo-dāro





45. Yamāi Image. Beḍsā

47. Caitya entrance. Kārle



46.
Satī
Monument,
Ambarnāth

48. Anāthapiṇḍika's donation



49. Aurangzeb's Mosque, Banāras



50. Caitya Capital, Kārle

51. Viṣṇu shrine, Māmallapuram

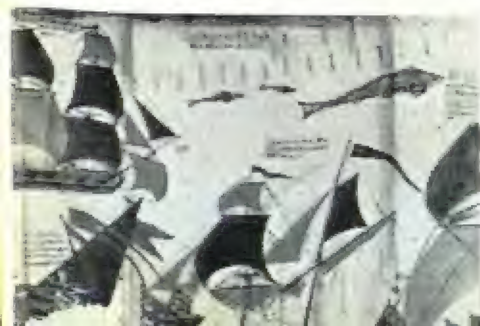


52. Demon soldiers. Gandhāra



53. Funerary Stele: Naval Battle Monument at Eksar

54. A British Defeat



55. Muzzle of Cannon at Bijāpūr



56. Palace of Mānsingh in the fort at Gwalior

57. *Outer defences, Lohogaḍ Fort*



58. Jahāngīr receives his son at court



59. Votive Bronze Images of an Unknown Cola Couple

60.

Kaṇiṣka

Statue

at

Mathurā





61.
Royal pastimes from a relief at Vijayanagar

62.

Court

dancers

and

singers,

Chidambaram

Temple





63. Kṛṣṇadeva-rāya with his Chief Queens



64. Rājendra Coḷa

GRATULATORIA

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COMMENTARY TO THE ILLUSTRATIONS

GROUP I: Pottery (1–7)

1. Potter's discs (*śevaṭā*); stone, diameter 22 cm. Top half removed and inverted in the one on the right. The socket is partially lined with a sheet of tin or thin steel, to prevent wear.

2. The disc is used only by women. The lady is Mrs. Belsare; her husband was kind enough to demonstrate the Poona pottery technique in full. A pad supports the clay being moulded; the disc is turned by pushing on the clay and by the big toe of the left foot applied to the top half.

3. Potter's wheel (used only by men), Poona. The pots are about the largest size that can be finished on the wheel, with Poona clay. Note uniformity of the vessels, without a template of any sort. The wheel has wooden spokes, and is built of a clay-coir mixture rammed over the spokes and four to six bamboo rims; if properly made, it should last at least ten years. The flat-based pivot is portable, of hard wood (*Acacia catechu*); on its sharp point fits a chalcedony bearing set into the wooden center of the wheel. The wheel is speeded up when it slows down by a free rod that can fit into a wooden socket set near the edge.

4. Compaction and expansion of vessels first turned on the wheel; the original size is shown in front of the potter, and looks relatively larger because of the photo-perspective. The rim is not touched at all. All pottery made by women on the potter's disc is finished — without expansion — in the same way by the men, from an initial rough stage. The large jars (pithoi) have to be constructed on the disc in as many as three consecutive stages, and the joints at the transition patted out of existence. The open vessel contains ashes to prevent the clay from sticking to the paddle and the terra-cotta 'anvil' held inside the pot; even the potter uses an old tin to hold the water, though such tins are driving him out of business.

5. Banāras potter. Superior clay enables him to finish larger vessels (northern red ware) on the wheel, which is solid, and therefore heavier than the Poona model.

6. Black polished ware, of the famous 'rouletted' type, from R. E. M. Wheeler's excavations at Arikamedu, near Pondichery (p. 47). This basic discovery provided for the first time a fixed date for the pottery index. The imported Roman ware is generally labelled with the maker's name and thereby accurately dated. It went out of fashion about 50 A.D.; the Sātavāhana imitations ceased soon afterwards

7. Sātavāhana jug, from the Deccan College excavations at Newāsā.

GROUP II: Production (8-26)

8. "Gilgamesh" on Indus seal. The prototype is common at all stages of cylinder-seal manufacture in Mesopotamia, the bearded, naked (but for a belt), lion-killing athlete identified with the Sumerian hero. The Indus specimen is ungirt, comparatively anaemic (though another, cruder seal is known of this sort), and the animals strangled may be tigers. This seal and the next point to a common stratum of tradition between Mesopotamia and India (p. 53) as well as trade.

9. "Enkidu": The bull-man is a friend of Gilgamesh in the epic, and frequently depicted in Mesopotamian seals, but hitherto found on just one seal of Indus manufacture (p. 54).

10. Persian water-wheel, worked by a donkey and a small humped bull of Kāṭhiāwāḍ type; miniature in the British Museum. The Persian wheel was known in the 7th century (*Har.* 94, 104), but apparently introduced much earlier to the west Punjab by the rascally Metrodorus of Constantine (McCrindle, *Ancient India* p. 185).

11. Indus humped bull. The glyptic is more impressive than in the photograph, for the seal is on two planes at an angle, so that the head is fore-shortened in the picture.

12. Temple bull with embroidered cloth; his main function is to haul the *pālkhī* of Jñāneśvar from Aḷandī (p. 43) to Paṇḍharpūr and back in the great annual procession. The procession is supposed to have gained in size and importance from the days of Haibat Bābā about the end of the 18th century, but the sacred pilgrimage was certainly practised long before then, and the route passes through sites of clear neolithic occupation. Bulls with painted horns and similar caparison are exhibited during *navarātra* (nine days from October new moon), when there is a parade of garlanded and decorated bulls in most villages; this probably derives from ancient sacrifices.

13. Sāṇḍa bull, Banāras 1940; dedicated to Śiva (p. 197), this animal is branded on the flank with a number as well, apparently to distinguish him from strays.

14. Water-buffalo (p. 131) relaxing. Heavy, dark, sluggish, hardy, fertile, productive with little care, far cleaner than it looks, docile enough to be led by a child, but suspicious of innovations and perfectly capable when roused, of charging a tiger or a locomotive, the buffalo would be a fitting national symbol for India.

15. Ploughing scene on Gandhāran relief, of the Kuṣāṇa period, in the Lahore Museum. The scene depicted young Gotama's first meditation

while his father and the other Sakyans were ploughing; the shadow of the tree under which he sat remained miraculously fixed. The sculpture preserves a tradition which proves that Buddha's father was not a king but a tribal oligarch who put his own hand to the plough, while retaining the right to bear arms (cf. p. 203): change to food-production, but not yet a change to caste. The Buddha and the gods adoring him have been systematically mutilated; the ploughman and heavy plough (with humped oxen) would pass without comment to this day.

16. Pedestal of a Bodhisattva statue from Sahri-Bahlol, in the Peshāwar Museum, perhaps as late as the 4th century A.D.; the plough and worker on the right compare with the preceding.

17. Harrow ploughing (pp. 64-7). Note that the seed drills are single hand-tubes, and that the sowing is done separately, by the women.

18. Kabīr (p. 272) weaving and preaching to his disciples; a miniature in the British Museum.

19. Tanners' pit for soaking buffalo hides in lime before the hair and flesh are worked off. The tanners are of the Ḍhor caste, and have been driven out of the village by the encroachment of factory production. Lack of capital prevents their using permanent vats, modern technique, rubber boots or gloves for protection; it also puts them at the mercy of the middleman, as the hides have to be paid for in cash. The potters are in a similar position. Both are losing to factory production.

20. Manufacture of brown sugar (*jāgari*, or *gūḷ*). The sugar-cane juice is boiled down in large pan (right background), allowed to crystallize partially in the stone vat (foreground), from which it is scraped off in a sticky state and trampled down into moulds (left background).

21. Village hut at Ambarnāth; clean and sanitary, of wood and sorghum stalks.

22. Māṅg slum hut at Poona (p. 30) of mud and tin from old kerosene drums. Caste prevents the occupant being allowed too near the other slum residents; poverty inhibits a better construction, as the man himself is a rentless squatter on the land.

23. Women waiting for relief food in the Bihār famine, 1951. An estimated 3½ million people died in the Bengal famine of 1943, under British rule and wartime conditions. But railways and government action now make the direct effects of a famine small, without removing the root causes, or diminishing secondary effects and the misery.

24. Making cakes of cattle-dung to be dried for use as fuel. This creates a shortage of fertiliser for the fields, while the land has already been deforested.

25. Sindri fertiliser factory, built by the Indian government after independence. Neither private enterprise nor the British could manage this vitally necessary advance in production.

26. Bhakra-Nangal hydel channel, another of the state-planned national projects. Such multi-purpose schemes are needed in far larger number to control floods, provide water for irrigation, and produce electric

power for home and factory use. Their most attactive function for the ruling class is to provide new opportunities for investment.

GROUP III: Coins (27–41)

(The specimens chosen, 27-41, are not the main coinages of the periods, but selected for their unusual character. For regular issues, the reader may consult the standard works on Indian numismatics by Rapson, Cunningham, V. A. Smith, J. Allan, R. B. Whitehead, and others.)

27. Post-Asokan silver punch-marked coin from the East Khandesh hoard (*JNSI* 8, 1946, pp. 63-6). This is the old *kārṣāpaṇa*.

28. Coin of Peukelaotis. Reverse, humped bull with legend in Greek: *TAUROS*; and Kharoṣṭī: usable. Obverse, the Tyche (fertility and protective goddess) of Peukelaotis, wearing a lotus crown, holding a lotus (Nelumbium) in her right and a lotus seed-pod (torus) in her left hand (as do the *apsaras* in many temple sculptures) —both fertility symbols. Kharoṣṭī legend: *Pakhalavadi-devada AMBI*, showing that she is a mother-goddess.

29. Menander (p. 232-3). This is the identical silver coin referred to on p. 164, now (like the next) in the collection of Mr. S. A. Joglekar, a pleader of Poona. Obv. portrait of Menander: *BASILEOS SOTEROS MENANDROU*; rev. Athene promakhos. *mahārājasa tratārasa Menaṃdrasa.*

30. Apollodotos I; found near Poona: Obv. elephant, *BASILEOS APOLLODOTOU SOTEROS*; rev. humped bull: *Mahārājasa Apuludatasa tratarasa.*

31. Nahapāna (p. 233, 255): obv., portrait of king with Greek lettering: *rannio Noapanasa Kaaratasa.*

32. Unique silver Sātavāhana portrait coin, modelled after the preceding, of an unknown Sātakaṇi, perhaps of Gotamiputra (p. 233, 255).

33. Yaudheya (p. 234) tribal coin.

34. Udumbara tribal coin (p. 38).

35. Gold coin in the joint names of Candragupta and the Licchavi princess Kumāradevi (p. 144, 290).

36. Gold coin of Kumāragupta I on horseback, chasing a rhinoceros.

37. Śrī-Ha; from a hoard of 994 silver coins deposited at the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay (p. 288). Obv. *śrī-ha;* rev. fire-altar of Sassanian model. All the coins seem to be of identical type, but statistical analysis of weights shows that they must have been fabricated at different times (distribution skew-negative, platykurtic), and circulated for uneven periods. The weight standard (3.51 gm.) is that of the *kārṣāpaṇa*, but the variance (0.0307) is much greater. There is no supporting evidence for the attribution to Harṣa of Kanauj.

38. Sāmantadeva, silver coin of the frontier region (Ohind, Und) of the early 10th century; obv. humped bull, *śrī-sāmantadeva;* rev. knight on horseback, *bhi.* By this time, the hero who charged the enemy single-handed, ahead of his own battle line, had acquired a special designation in

Sanskrit, *nāsira*.

39. Rare coin of Mahmud of Ghāzni (d. 1030 A.D.), with Arabic and Sanskrit legends.

40. Silver coin of Akbar, showing Rāma and Sītā going into the wilderness. This was the period of closest approach between the upper Hindu and Muslim feudal nobility.

41. Portrait coin of Jahāngir.

GROUP IV: Religion (42–51)

42. Crowds bathing (p. 237) at Kurukṣetra in 1954 to free the sun from the demon Rāhu, who had caused the solar eclipse.

43. Sāñcī (Sanchi). The great stūpa. The original name of the place seems to have been Kākināda-boṭa. The stūpa was greatly enlarged in antiquity, wrecked by treasure hunters in about the middle of the 19th century, and rebuilt in the 20th century.

44. Ruins of the "Great Bath" at Mohenjo-dāro (pp. 59-60). Size of the tank is about 29′ x 41′, and it was filled from a well in a room to the right. Rooms go around three sides of the *puṣkara* for the rites connected with its use. See the concluding pages of my note "Urvaśī & Purūravas", *JBBRAS*. 27 (1951), 1-30.

45. Beḍsā, red-coated relief image of Yamāī (p. 250) at the inner end of the *vihāra* cave; incomparably cruder than the fine bell-capitals in the adjoining caitya cave, but her cult is still alive! Worship is given and sacrifices (usually a coconut) are made to her by the villagers, whose dreams she disturbs whenever neglected too long. Apart from the dreams, there seems to be no regular worship, as at Kārle.

46. Satī (p. 285-6) monument at Ambarnāth of an otherwise forgotten widow who immolated herself with her husband's corpse; perhaps of the early 17th century.

47. Kārle, entrance to the Caitya cave, rather strange decoration, like no. 50 (p. 253), for a monks' assembly hall. The couples are modelled after the donors or commemorate their parents, though often called *yakṣas*.

48. Bhārhūt relief of the earliest known purchase of land for cash: Anathapindika-Sudatta (p. 145; p. 207) donates the grove of prince Jeta at Śrāvastī, purchased by covering the ground with coins. The coins themselves would be punch-marked, and the hair-dressing of the men would look a bit odd today, but the labourers, bullock-cart, and the libation vessel remain unchanged.

49. The great mosque at Banāras, built on the site of a Mahādeva temple demolished for the purpose by Aurangzeb; contrast this evidence of strain and inner conflict, expressed in religious terms, with no. 40. The *ghāṭ* is a center of trade in bamboo.

50. Kārle, capital in the Caitya cave.

51. Intrusive shrine of Viṣṇu on the left portion of the great Pallava cliff-carving at Māmallapuram (Mahābalipuram, 36 miles south of Madrās,

on the sea-coast; p. 301). The scene represents ascetics in the presence of the rival god Śiva, and at least four figures (including one in the foreground with head knocked off) have been seriously damaged in carving the Viṣṇu shrine, which has no function whatever in the original story. The underlying *smārta-vaiṣṇava* (p. 246) struggle may be regarded as that between feudalism from above and feudalism from below, though kings might worship either or both deities from the Gupta period down. For another (highly doubtful) interpretation of Viṣṇu at Mahābalipuram, cf. L. B. Keny, *ABORI* 29, 213-26.

GROUP V: Military art (52-57)

52. Demon army of the tempter Māra on a Gandhāran relief. The lowest soldiers are dressed in Roman style armour, not correctly understood, as the scales of one cuirass turn upwards. Māra derives from the Iranian Ahriman.

53. Funerary stele (*vīragal*) in memory of heros fallen in some unknown naval battle not later than the 10th century A.D.; at Eksar, less than two miles from Borīvlī station Bombay.

54. Defeat of the East India Company's fleet in 1731, by the Āṃgares (Angrias) off their island fortress Janjira Kulābā (off Alibāg, opposite Bombay). Detail of a contemporary paper scroll (water-colour) now in Bhārat Itihās Saṃshodhak Maṇḍal, Poona; by kindness of Mr. G. H. Khare. Lower center, a British ship being captured by Sakhoji Bābā and upper left, part of another in flight. Upper right, fishing nets offshore. The ships of both sides are seen to be of comparable size, construction, armament, and rigging. In 1739-57, the British, allied with the Peshwās, finally defeated the Āṃgares. Both feared the ambitious sea-lords (Kānhoji Āṃgare, who had died before this action, had been high admiral of the Marāṭhā fleet with title *sarkhel*) as they had reduced most of the forts between Poona and the Koṅkaṇ. One of the consequences was that shipbulding and the heavier carrying trade was thereafter monopolized by the East India Company, and Indian shipping preserved only primitive types.

55. Muzzle of the Malik-i-Maidān cannon on the walls of Bījapūr. The caliber (2′4″) is shown by the human figure; stone balls to fit the bore still exist. The cannon was cast in gun-metal at Ahmednagar under the supervision of the Turkish engineer Muhammad bin Hassan Rūmi in 1549 A.D. The muzzle decoration is symbolic, showing an elephant (the cannon-ball) charging out of a dragon's mouth. More for ostentation than use, the smooth-bore shows one of the failures of the feudal period to get the most out of techniques within its reach. The artillery of the rival Vijayanagar kingdom was decidedly poorer in spite of the incredible wealth amassed by the Hindu kings after Kṛṣṇa-deva-rāya (no. 63). The difference led to disaster in the final battle (Jan. 23, 1565, at Taggi-Rākṣas, sometimes called "of Talikoṭa"), with annihilation of the Vijayanagar army, capital, and empire. The cannon shown is said to have been the

largest of the 600 assorted pieces which, loaded with bags of copper coin in lieu of grape-shot, wiped out the great charge of the best Vijayanagar troops, thereby assuring victory to the Muslim confederates. A cult has been set up on top of the gun by the custodian and some local people.

56. Gwalior fort, 'the jewel among forts'; view of Rājā Mān Singh's palace, built at the end of the 15th century. The hilltop (then called Gopagiri) was held by the Huns (p. 234) under Mihiragula at the beginning of the 6th century, and must already have been fortified to dominate the junction of trade routes by the time of the first Gupta emperors. The palace founded a famous school of Indian music.

57. The outer defences of Lohogaḍ (*IG.* 16.170), looking down from the inner wall upon the main gate and the pass (p. 248) which leads from Kārle and Bhājā (to the left) towards the Paunā valley and the coast. The surviving fortifications are not older than the Bāhmani period.

GROUP VI: Court life & portraits (58–64)

58. Jahāngīr receives his son, in the presence of the leading nobles. In the original colours, this is one of the finest examples of portraiture in Mughal painting, which reached its zenith under Akbar and Jahāngīr. The nobles were not hereditary, but carefully selected from various regions, faiths, and parties, so as to prevent any strong coalition. This meant progressively greater power in the hands of the actual feudal landholders.

59. Unknown feudal couple, of the Coḷa period; votive bronze statuettes with attached lamps, in the Śiva temple at Kaḷahasti; contrast the devotional expression with that of the donor couples at Kārle, in no. 47.

60. Kaṇiṣka; inscribed headless statue in yellow sandstone at the museum, Mathurā. The boots are characteristic, as is the Kuṣāṇa title *devaputra*, copied from the Chinese "Son of Heaven". The image of the sun-god, when anthropomorphic (*e.g.* three such images in the Archaeological Museum, Gwalior, one at Delhi) is similarly booted and robed, as would be expected from the importation of the cult, with Magian priests, from Śakadvīpa, during Kuṣāṇa times.

61. Royal pastimes, relief at Vijayanagar: review of the riding horses, hunting, fights in the arena, harem scene, &c.

62. Pediment of the Subrahmaṇya temple, Chidambaram, showing court ballet with singers and musicians.

63. King Kṛṣṇa-deva-rāya (1509-29) of Vijayanagar with his two principal queens; votive copper repoussé images in the Śrinivāsa-Perumaḷ temple, Tirumalai. His favourite queen Chinna-devī or Nāgalā-devī (to his right) had been a courtezan. The king founded the city of Nāgalāpuram (modern Hospeṭ) in her name, as the first outpost on the arterial trade route from Vijayanagar through Banavāsi to the port at Bhatkaḷ.

64. Rājendra Coḷa, late copy of a votive bronze image in the Bṛhadīśvara temple, Tanjore.

CHAPTER I

SCOPE AND METHODS

THE light-hearted sneer "India has had some episodes, but no history" is used to justify lack of study, grasp, intelligence on the part of foreign writers about India's past. The considerations that follow will prove that it is precisely the episodes — lists of dynasties and kings, tales of war and battle spiced with anecdote, which fill school texts — that are missing from Indian records. Here, for the first time, we have to reconstruct a history without episodes, which means that it cannot be the same type of history as in the European tradition.[1]

1.1. For the purpose of this work, *history is defined as the presentation, in chronological order, of successive developments in the means and relations of production.* Before coming to the implications and the technique for its effective utilization, let us first see why this definition is necessary.

India, for all its great literary heritage, has produced no historical writers comparable to Herodotus, Thucydides, Polybius, Livy, Tacitus. Many Indian kings of the middle ages (e.g. Harṣa *circa* 600-640) were incomparably superior in their education and literary ability to contemporary rulers in Europe; they had personally led great armies to victory in heavy war-

fare. Nevertheless, not one seems ever to have thought of composing a narrative like Caesar's *Commentaries* or Xenophon's *Anabasis*. The tradition was of graceful court drama, an occasional hymn in praise of the gods, or a witty epigram. There remains only one Indian chronicle worth the name, the *Rājataraṅgiṇī*[2] by a Kaśmirian named Kalhaṇa, composed in Sanskrit verse during 1149-50 A. D., and continued by two successors. This chronicle suffers from all the mannered conventions of Sanskrit poetry, in particular the fatal *double entendre* that manages only to obscure whatever reality the author meant to portray. The period was of desperate struggle between the central power and feudal lords in Kaśmīr, but even the portion dealing with the actual time and place can hardly be compared in quality, depth, content to the account by Thucydides of the Peloponnesian war. For the rest of the country, till the Muslim period, we have nothing even as good as Kalhaṇa, (who was brought up close to the court with full access to all sorts of records) while Kalhaṇa himself lapses into legend, myth, or pure romance when trying to reproduce the annals of his native land before the seventh century. The sources for the older period survive as *purāṇas* (= 'the ancient stories'), which in their present form, are only religious fables and cant, with whatever historical content the works once possessed heavily encrusted by myth, diluted with semi-religious legends, effaced during successive redactions copied by innumerable, careless scribes; so that one finds great difficulty in restoring as much as the king-lists.[3] Cuneiform records, even the Sumerian, yield much more information, particularly about social conditions in their respective countries.

What has to be done, should we attempt to match the European type of historiography, may be illustrated briefly by just one example.[4] In *JASB*. 72 (1903), p. 1-13, Cecil Bendall described a manuscript from Nepal of a portion of the Sanskrit epic *Rāmāyaṇa*, the colophon of which showed it to have been copied in Tirhūt (Bihār), during the reign of a king Gāṅgeyadeva, in the year 1076 of an unspecified era. This king was described as *gaüḍa-dhvaja*, "of the banner of Bengal." Bendall and others identified the person with a southern, Kalacuri ruler Gāṅgeyadeva in Albirūnī's *Kitāb-ul-Hind*[5]

(written about 1030 A. D.), taking the epithet to mean 'conqueror of Bengal.' As usual, doubt was immediately cast upon the identification. The couple of Sanskrit inscriptions of the Kalacuri dynast which survive contain neither the special epithets nor supporting evidence for the conquest. A good photostat of the codex exhibited at Lahore in 1940 enabled one of the scholars present to notice that the colophon had been misread : the correct title was *garuḍa-dhvaja*, which meant slight modification of one letter, with completely changed meaning. Far from being a conqueror of Bengal, the princeling was at most a follower of the god Viṣṇu, who rides the mythical *garuḍa* eagle with which the royal banner was presumably emblazoned. The most plausible current interpretation is that we have here mention of a minor subordinate chieftain of southern (Rāṣṭrakūṭa) descent who ruled over a small portion of Bihār, in the year 1019-20 A. D., the period when Muslims were consolidating their hold over the north-west. That such miserable sources have to be discussed at great length for a comparatively recent, well-documented period shows without further argument the straits to which the formal historian is reduced in India.

However, classical European historical records do not by themselves convey full meaning to the reader, nor do they constitute a balanced history. Anyone can enjoy a good translation of Polybius, Livy, or Tacitus for the clarity of style, restraint in panegyric, unadorned narrative. Nevertheless, for a real history of Rome, one would have to read Theodor Mommsen's *Römische Geschichte*, or the corresponding volumes of the Cambridge history. Only a part of the difference between the classical text and its modern interpreters is due to comparison of several writers. The results of internal and external text-criticism are perhaps seen at their best in Grote's *History of Greece*, with its patient, beautifully written, enduringly useful analysis of Athenian democracy. Mere textual erudition does not suffice to explain the greatness and validity of such a magnificent individual effort as Eduard Meyer's *Geschichte des Altertums*, let alone the works of cooperative scholarship on the history of antiquity that now hold the field. The difference is just that the written record has

been powerfully supplemented by archaeology, which supplies not only confirmation but precise meaning from material relics of the ancient period. Inscriptions, coins, epigraphs in general, complete the written annals and histories; bilingual texts enabled cuneiform tablets and Egyptian hieroglyphs to be deciphered, adding substantially to the record. Even for ancient Rome, the military columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius, triumphal arches, sarcophagi, and other sculpture made it possible for us to comprehend terms like *testudo* and *agger*, whose technical meaning had been lost between the classical period and the Renaissance. The existence of various emperors was confirmed by their coins. It was possible to conduct systematic archaeological excavations in verification of the documents; for example, Caesar's fantastic double siege of Alesia was attested by excavations at Alise-Ste-Reine. It is precisely for the older period, such as the Etruscan, where the record does not suffice, the language has not been clearly read, and the archaeology, though impressive, has not been sufficiently extensive to solve major problems by itself, that we still have considerable doubts. Yet even here, progress is far beyond anything achieved for India. Pausanias's description of Greece is now a valuable guide well confirmed by the spade; even the Homeric legend of Troy which has been dismissed as pure myth came down to earth as soon as Schliemann dug at Hissarlik. Though a religious work, the Bible retains far greater historical and archaeological value than any similar Indian book, because the people who transmitted it had continuous contact with the site and were used to describing places and events with a trader's accuracy. From our material, it is still impossible to say where the great theme-battles of the two epics *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* were fought, let alone when—if indeed they represent any historical events at all. The imaginative but nevertheless quite reasonable account of Guglielmo Ferrero[6] reconstructs events at the end of the Roman Republic, almost day by day; the driest pages of Suetonius and Procopius are brought to vividly plausible life by Robert Graves. We Indians have yet to prove that a king Vikrama really existed from whose victory or coronation in 57 B. C. the Vikrama era still current in India is supposed to begin. It seems far more pro-

bable today that this legendary king was the reflection of Gupta imperial glory which transformed a previous, minor, but popular, tribal era.

This shows how futile the direct procedure would be for ancient India, where the intrinsic source-material (such as that in the two great epics) is poor, while archaeology has so far achieved nothing of correlative historical value. The great Homeric figures like Achilles and Odysseus are not those for whose existence confirmatory evidence has been discovered. It is the minor character Eteokles who seems to be the Tawagalawaś of Hittite epigraphs.[7] The *Chanson de Roland* notwithstanding, Roland was not the most important of Charlemagne's captains, nor the defeat at Roncesvalles a crucial military event of the reign. We know a good deal, both from recorded history and from archaeology, of Maximus (A. D. 383-8), the rival to Theodosius, who for a while split the Roman empire ; as Maxen Wledig in the *Wayland Smith Saga*, or in the Welsh *Mabinogion*, he conveys very little impression of historical reality. Nothing could be discovered of the kings Attila and Theoderic from the *Niebelungenlied's* Etzel and Dietrich. King Arthur, who belonged to the period between the withdrawal of Roman legions from Britain and the Saxon conquest, still remains virtually pure legend ; Robin Hood, though derived from a historical person, is taken to be a folklore lay figure. If we trusted the major Indian documents, we should have hardly as much to go on as the romantic fables here mentioned.

The numerous epigraphic finds, a byproduct of desultory archaeological work, do not suffice either to restore a reasonably comprehensive dynastic list or to define the regnal years and complete territorial holdings of those Indian kings whose names survive. Therefore some historians resort to highly improbable euhemeristic reconstruction from plain myth, like F. E. Pargiter in his *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition* (Oxford, 1922). The alternative for the undocumented period was philological. Common or similar words denoting kinship in the Indo-European languages seemed to yield information regarding Aryan social organization in their original homeland, before their numerous tribal groups separated for migration in various directions. That the word might have migrated with the social

institution and concept of relationship, without substantial travel on the part of the Aryan people, was not considered a serious possibility. The English word daughter, German *Tochter*, *thygatêr* in Greek, *dear* in Irish, Lithuanian *dukte*, *doch* in Russian are of common derivation with the Sanskrit *duhitṛ*. The Sanskrit root *duh* means 'to milk,' so the word was, according to this theory, originally *dogdhrī* = 'she who milks,' to indicate that it was the daughter of the primitive Aryan family who did the milking. This charming picture seems to have been drawn first by Lassen, quoted with approval by Max Müller,[8] plagiarised by various Indian authors in deservedly obscure writings, re-adopted from the Marāṭhī, and now gains an unforeseen sanctity by translation of the last such repetition[9] into Russian, which saves a certain type of 'left intellectual' the trouble of reading anything else, or thinking for himself. Unfortunately, this attractive conjecture still fails to explain why the Aryan languages preserved a common word for 'she who milks' without a common word for 'milk.' It might be noted in passing that the pastoral life is usually admitted to be patriarchal; milking the cow comes at a comparatively late stage in herding what was male property, so that it would not be primitive Aryan, nor at first the work of women. It has been remarked by derisive philologists that there exists a common root-derivation for 'foot,' but none for 'hand' in the Indo-European languages, whence the same logic consistently applied would demand the conclusion that the unseparated Aryans possessed feet, but not hands, which must have sprouted after the separation!

1.2. We are thus led inevitably to concentrate upon successive developments, in chronological order, in the means and relations of production. Only this can tell us how people lived at any period. The point of view here is, as in any other science worth the name, purely materialistic. Man makes himself[10] by using tools in order to live increasingly well at the expense of his environment. The sole practical test of his success has been, in the past, comparatively sudden increase in the human population with every important basic discovery in the means of production. Social organization cannot be more advanced than the instruments of production will allow,

particularly when man has progressed from the food-gathering quasi-animal stage to that of food production, which definitely raises him above the animal. Our definition has the merit of forcing us to notice and to account for certain features peculiar to Indian society and history, such as caste, or the remarkable lack of historical sense among all but a few of the most recent intellectuals. Certainly, this is the only definition known which will allow a reasonable treatment of pre-literate history, generally termed 'pre-history.' The technique of applying the definition in practice means not only the collation of the written record with archaeology, but the interpretation of each of these in conjunction with ethnographic data. The existence of any classical literature implies the class-division of society; literacy in the oldest times meant the pre-existence of a temple, priesthood, urban life, division of society into producing groups and others who expropriated the relatively low surplus produced. Only the latter wrote the epigraphs with which the historian must work; the producers had not the leisure for literacy. Digging up the past tells us a good deal about the instruments of production. To work back from the houses, grave-goods, tools, and utensils found by the archaeologist to the former productive relations, usually relations between classes and groups, needs a study of ethnography. The principle has been used by modern archaeologists, who utilize studies of modern but still primitive African or Australian tribes to evaluate finds in Europe; thus, certain types of joint burial would indicate whether the society was predominantly matriarchal, patriarchal, in transition from the former to the latter, or in the pre-clan stage preceding both.

We have to go much deeper than this for the grasp of Indian tradition. It is not the primitive tribes of other countries that are of primary interest here, nor primitive Indian survivals in marginal territory such as the Khasias, Nagas, Oraons, Bhils, Todas, Kadars. The social clusters that survive even in the heart of fully developed areas, say in and around cities, with others which mark all strata of a caste society as having developed at some older date from the absorption of tribal groups,[11] constitute priceless evidence for the interpretation of some ancient record or archaeological find; their sur-

vival as backward groups also furnishes the real problem for explanation in the light of historical development. India is a country of long survivals. People of the atomic age rub elbows with those of the chalcolithic. The vast majority of countryside gods are still daubed with a red pigment that is a palpable substitute for long-vanished blood sacrifices — which also survive in a few cases, although the very idea of blood sacrifices would now come as a shock to many devotees. One finds rites practised which clearly go back to the stone age, though the votaries — often people with a modern education — are not conscious of the incredibly long continuity. Such practices may have no foundation in brahmin scriptures, but other portions of Sanskrit ritual works show equally primitive sacraments adopted at almost all periods, down to the last century. Formulae from the Ṛgveda are still recited, after three millennia, at orthodox Hindu marriage and funeral ceremonies for the higher castes ; but the same rites often show features that have no vedic justification whatever, practised with the same earnestness as the documented vedic portion, without incongruity or contradiction being felt by the participant.

Concentration upon the study of religion, superstition, ritual can lead us very far away from history ; to neglect their study altogether throws away valuable features of the superstructure that indicate real changes in the basis. The survivals mean that no conflict was felt in that particular case, or that primitive instruments of production have endured in spite of imposing, complicated, often tortuous developments of the superstructure. There was rarely the bitter, violent conflict between the most primitive and most developed elements of society in India that one finds in the devastating interaction of Spanish conquistadores (with their fire-arms and small-pox) with tribal cultures in South America ; or of traders who carried syphilis, tuberculosis, measles, alcohol to the previously healthy population of many south sea islands. No Indian conquest had the pernicious effect of Roman legions and moneylenders upon transalpine Gauls, or of medieval Christian missionaries upon Germanic tribal priests.

1.3. The present approach implies a definite theory of history known as dialectical materialism, also called Marxism

after its founder. An excellent statement of what we need occurs in Karl Marx's preface to his *Critique of Political Economy* (1859):[12]

"In the social production of their means of existence, men enter into definite, necessary relations which are independent of their will, productive relationships which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The aggregate of those productive relationships constitutes the economic structure of society, the real basis on which a juridical and political superstructure arises and to which definite forms of social consciousness correspond. The mode of production of the material means of existence conditions the whole process of social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but, on the contrary, it is their social existence that determines their consciousness. At a certain stage of their development the material productive forces of society come into contradiction with the existing productive relationships, or, what is but a legal expression for these, with the property relationships within which they had moved before. From forms of development of the productive forces, these relationships are transformed into their fetters. Then an epoch of social revolution opens. With the change in the economic foundation the whole superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In considering such revolutions it is necessary always to distinguish between the material revolution in the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with scientific accuracy, and the juridical, political, religious, aesthetic, or philosophic — in a word, ideological forms wherein men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out. A social system never perishes before all the productive forces have developed for which it is wide enough; and new, higher productive relationships never come into being before the material conditions for their existence have been brought to maturity within the womb of the old society itself. Therefore mankind always sets itself only such problems as it can solve; for when we look closer we will always find that the problem itself only arises when the material conditions for its solution are already present or at least in the process of coming into being. In broad outline, the Asiatic, the ancient, the feudal and the modern bourgeois modes of production can be indicated as progressive epochs in the economic system of society.[13] With this bourgeois social system, therefore, the pre-history of human society comes to a close."

When one applies these inspiring words to the Indian problem, it must be kept in mind that Marx speaks of all mankind where we deal only with a fraction. For short periods in restricted localities, a dead end, retrogression, or evolution by

atrophy are possible which cannot stop the progress of mankind as a whole, not even mankind under the threat of total annihilation by atomic warfare. We shall at times have to reconstruct the material changes from what survives as marks upon the ideological superstructure, but let it be noted that Marxism is far from the economic determinism which its opponents so often take it to be. Ideas (including superstition) become a force, once they have gripped the masses; they supply the forms in which men become conscious of their conflicts and fight them out. No historian may dismiss or ignore such ideas nor can he be regarded as having fulfilled his task unless he shows why, how, and when the grip was secured. The adoption of Marx's thesis does not mean blind repetition of all his conclusions (and even less, those of the official, party-line Marxists) at all times. It will be shown that India had never a classical slave economy in the same sense as Greece or Rome. The die-hard argument that some people were not free, there was some sort of slavery, is not to the point here. The issue is of quantity, which by massive change transforms quality too. The really vexed question is what is meant by the Asiatic mode of production,[14] never clearly defined by Marx. Asia is dominated culturally by China and India. The former with its great annals, court and family records, inscriptions, coins now supplemented by excavation gives a far better picture from about 1000 B. C. onwards than we can ever hope to obtain for India. It is futile to expect that documents might later be discovered in India to fill the long gaps, for it is known that the mass of unpublished Sanskrit works contain virtually nothing of solid historical importance. What Marx himself said about India [15] cannot be taken as it stands.

" These small and extremely ancient Indian (village) communities, some of which have continued down to this day, are based on possession in common of the land, on the blending of agriculture and handicrafts, and on an unalterable division of labour, which serves, whenever a new community is started as a plan and scheme ready cut and dried. Occupying areas from 100 up to several thousand acres, each forms a compact whole producing all it requires. The chief part of the products is destined for direct use by the community itself, and does not take the form of a commodity. Hence production here is independent of that division of labour brought about in

Indian society as a whole, by means of the exchange of commodities. It is the surplus alone, that becomes a commodity and a portion of even that, not until it has reached the hands of the State, into whose hands from time immemorial a certain quantity of those products has found its way in the shape of rent in kind. . . . The simplicity of the organisation of production in these self-sufficing communities that constantly reproduce themselves in the same form, and when accidentally destroyed spring up again on the spot and with the same name — this simplicity supplies the key to the secret of the unchangeableness of Asiatic societies, an unchangeableness in such striking contrast wtih the constant dissolution and refounding of Asiatic States and the never-ceasing changes of dynasty. The structure of the economic elements of society remains untouched by the storm-clouds of the political sky" (*Capital*, I. 391 ff).

Acute and brilliant as these remarks are, they remain misleading nevertheless. Most villages produce neither metals nor salt, two essentials that had mostly to be obtained by exchange, hence imply some commodity production. Who exchanged these commodities is a different matter. Marx was justified in saying that the surplus did not become a commodity till it reached the hands of the state — if one restricts the statement to certain periods. The villages did not exist "from times immemorial." The advance of plough-using agrarian village economy over tribal India is a great historical achievement by itself. Secondly, even when the size of the village unit remains unchanged, the density of these units plays a most important role ; the same region with two villages, or two hundred, or twenty thousand cannot bear the same form of superstructure, nor be exploited by the same type of state mechanism. Conversely, the progressive weight of this superstructure changes land ownership within the village. Change of quantity ultimately means change of quality. Similarly, we cannot let pass without challenge Marx's statement "Indian society has no history at all, at least no known history. What we call its history, is but the history of successive intruders who founded their empires on the passive basis of that unresisting and unchanging (village) society." In fact, the greatest periods of Indian history, the Mauryan, Sātavāhana, Gupta owed nothing to intruders ; they mark precisely the formation and spread of the basic village society, or the development of new trade centres.

For all that, the theoretical basis remains Marxist — as I understand the method. It seems to me that every historian has some theory, tacit or explicit, upon which his work is based. Ranke, who laid down the ideal of pure colourless narrative : " Ich werde es bloss sagen, wie es eigentlich gewesen ist," could not resist German national sentiment in his *Weltgeschichte*. Mommsen transferred to pre-capitalist Roman times the conflict between capitalist and working classes which was so clearly visible in his formative years.[16] Werner Sombart foresaw in 1934 and deliberately " left out of consideration the contingency, by no means remote, that Germany in the next ten years might become the camping ground of enemy troops." [17] Spengler's *Untergang des Abendlandes* made a sensation in its day with a bonfire of words, which no one can take as a serious guide to history.[18] I find it difficult, in spite of having read Arnold Toynbee, to handle such imponderables as certain of my countrymen think necessary for the historian : the Indian soul, race memory, the victory of ideals, the innate glory of the four-caste system, and so on. Marx had a scientific theory, which might have to be extended like those, in other fields, of his contemporaries Gauss, Maxwell, Darwin, Mendeleev, but which still has the equal merit of working in practice, of yielding verifiable predictions. He alone correctly pointed out the basic future effects of British rule in India : the consequences of railways and machine production which shattered the old village economy, and were to create a new bureaucracy, bourgeoisie, proletariat, leading ultimately to the severance of India from British rule.

" All the English *bourgeoisie* may be forced to do will neither emancipate nor materially amend the social condition of the mass of the people, depending not only on the development of the productive power, but of their appropriation by the people. But what they will not fail to do is to lay down the material premise for both. Has the *bourgeoisie* ever done more ? Has it ever effected a progress without dragging individuals and people through blood and dirt, through misery and degradation ? The Indians will not reap the fruits of the new elements of society scattered among them by the British *bourgeoisie* till in Great Britain itself the now ruling classes shall have been supplanted by the industrial proletariat, or till the Hindoos themselves shall have grown strong enough to throw off the British yoke altogether. At all events, we may safely expect to see,

at a more or less remote period, the regeneration of that great and interesting country. . . ." (New York *Daily Tribune*, August 8, 1953, "The future results of British rule in India ").

What has to be done is to take stock of later studies under Marx's direct inspiration by his colleague Engels,[19] on the nature and decay of tribal organisation. These, applied to modern discoveries in the field, will give us new results.

Thus, the more important question is not who was king, nor whether the given region had a king, but whether its people used a plough, light or heavy, at the time. The type of kingship, as a function of the property relations and surplus produced, depends upon the method of agriculture, not conversely. What was the role of caste in breaking up tribal groups to annex them to society? Where did the metals come from? When did commodity-exchange crops like the coconut become important; what relation did they have to communal and private land-holdings? Why have we no large-scale chattel slavery in the classical period, no proper serfdom in the feudal? What is the reason for survival of mesolithic rites, continued worship of stone-age gods even today among all classes? These questions have at least to be raised, their answers worked out as far as possible, if one adopts the new approach. Dynastic changes of importance, vast religious upheavals, are generally indicative of powerful changes in the productive basis, hence must be studied as such, not dismissed as senseless flickers on the surface of an unchanging substratum. The methods outlined above must be used actively in the study, for their validity has been proved by experience.

The present work cannot by its very nature be comprehensive. The field is now too vast for any one man to cover. But I hope at least to delineate a wide framework within which detailed results may be expected, while pointing out the methods available for reaching the end of such investigations. This implies some previous knowledge or further study on the part of the reader. Specifically, the reader should find here a reconstruction of the different ways whereby the three major geographical divisions of India (ignoring the recent separation of Pākistān) were settled and led to civilization: the valley of the

Indus, the valley of the Ganges, and the peninsula. He will have to remember that no single mode prevailed uniformly over the whole country at any one time ; so it is necessary to select for treatment that particular mode which, at any period, was the most vigorous, most likely to dominate production, and which inevitably spread over the greater part of the country, no matter how many of the older forms survived in outward appearance.

Notes and references :

1. As general reading may be recommended, with reservations : Vincent Smith's obsolete books on Indian history ; the sadly incomplete Cambridge *Ancient History of India.* Louis de la Vallée Poussin's *L'Inde aux temps des Mauryas* (Paris 1930) and *Dynasties et Histoire de l'Inde* (Paris 1935), give the major items of formal history, and the unresolved problems, with enviable clarity and conciseness, still useful in spite of much later work. The Bhāratiya Vidyā Bhavan of Bombay has projected a ten volume history of India whereof the first four are now available and the first three have been criticised in my *What constitutes Indian history* (*ABORI*, 35, 1955, 195-201). *L'Inde classique* by L. Renou, J. Filliozat, and others (Paris, vol. I, 1947 ; II 1953) is recommended for cultural surveys. A. L. Basham's *The wonder that was India* gives a compendium of the accepted results in a cautious manner. These books offer a good list of source materials, and bibliography. W. Ruben's : *Einführung in d. Indienkunde* shows how a good Sanskritist can go to pieces because of Marxism ill digested.

2. An excellent translation with very useful notes was made by M. Aurel Stein : *Kalhaṇa's Rājataraṅgiṇī, a chronicle of the kings of Kaśmir* (2 vol., London 1900).

3. F. E. Pargiter : *The purāṇa text of the dynasties of the Kali age* (Oxford, 1913), one of the most valuable purāṇic studies, collating the available information and analysing it. The purāṇas themselves await critical editions, particularly the unwieldy *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa.*

4. See V. V. Mirāshi's report in the *ABORI* 23, 1942, 291-301.

5. Translated as well as edited by Edward Sachau : *Albirūnī's India* (2 vol., London 1910).

6. Guglielmo Ferrero: *Grandezza e decadenza di Roma*; 5 vols. (1902-5; reprinted, Milano 1927-9).

7. O. R. Gurney : *The Hittites* (Pelican Books A 259, London 1952) gives a balanced discussion. An Alexander (Paris) of Ilios may be represented in the records.

8. F. Max Müller : *Chips from a German workshop* (2 vol., London 1868), vol. II, pp. 22-26.

9. S. A. Ḍāṅge : *India from primitive communism to slavery* (Bombay 1949); see *ABORI* 29 (1949) 271-277 for a critical review.

10. V. Gordon Childe : *Man makes himself* (London 1936 ; slightly revised reprint in the Thinkers Library, 1941) ; *What happened in history* (Pelican books A 108, revised ed. London 1954). Here an archaeologist evaluates human progress along consistently materialist lines, on the basis of his evidence.

11. The Indian decennial *Census* reports are useful before 1951, when the whole idea of classification by caste was officially abandoned as a Canutian method of abolishing caste distinctions. In addition, there are ethnographic reports covering most of the country, apart from single monographs on solitary tribes; cf. Thurston & Rangachari : *Tribes and castes of south India* ; H. H. Risley : *Tribes and castes of Bengal* (*Ethnographic Glossary*, 2 vol. Calcutta 1891); R. V. Russell and Hira Lal : *Tribes and castes of the Central Provinces ;* R. E. Enthoven : *Tribes and castes of Bombay*, (3 vol. Bombay 1922). Verrier Elwin's *The Baigas*, and *The Muria and their Ghotul ;* and S. C. Roy's *The Oraons* are samples of more recent work. The reader should not be misled by superficial observations on a slender factual basis, as in some of the works of O. R. Ehrenfels.

12. The references to Marxist writings will mostly be found in the *Handbook of Marxism* (London 1935) edited by Emile Burns.

13. Lenin repeats the passage and conclusions in his brilliant essay on the teachings of Karl Marx. Stalin, in his *Dialectical and historical materialism* (chap. IV, section 2, in the *History of the CPSU, short course*, Moscow 1950, pp. 128-161, particularly p. 151) changes the list of stages, adding the primitive tribal form, which is implied by the later work of Marx and Engels, and the socialist form which came into existence very recently, but omitting the Asiatic mode altogether.

14. There was some inconclusive discussion in the defunct *Pod Znamenam Marksizma* about what was meant by the Asiatic mode of production. India showed a series of parallel forms which cannot be put into the precise categories, for the mode based on slavery is absent, feudalism greatly different from the European type with serfdom and the manorial economy.

15. Marx and Engels on India may be studied best in a careful edition of their utterances on Britain (Moscow 1953). An undated, poorly annotated edition was issued under the signature of Mulk Rāj Āṇand at Allāhābād between 1934 and 1938 as number 4 of the Socialist Book Club Publications. It is rather curious to read today that R. Palme Dutt, Edgell Rickward, Pandit Jawāharlāl Nehru, Sajjād Zaheer, P. C. Joshi and Z. A. Ahmad helped the editor. Messrs. Subhās Chandra Bose, Narendra Deva, Jayaprakāsh Nārāyaṇ, M. R. Masāni, Rāmmanohar

Lohiā were foundation members of the club. None of them saw fit to warn the reader that the work is incomplete without addition of later studies by Marx and Engels on primitive society. This lack of depth may explain the later political vicissitudes of this strange company, of almost every one of whom may be said, *quantum mutatus ab illo*.

16. See Benjamin Farrington, *Modern Quarterly* 7, 1951-2, pp. 83-6.

17. Werner Sombart : *A new social philosophy* (trans. Princeton, 1937). The quotation is from p. xi of the preface, dated Berlin 1934.

18. The choicest mess of this sort was cooked up by Spengler in his *Preussentum und Sozialismus* (München 1920), but H. A. L. Fisher's *History of Europe* shows quite as pathetic a philosophy, and Arnold Toynbee's ten volumes on the philosophy of history make history immaterial.

19. Particularly, *The origin of the family, private property, and the state.* Marx's own study of the peasant communes ; *The Mark*, is also valuable.

CHAPTER II

THE HERITAGE OF PRE-CLASS SOCIETY

THE history that we are accustomed to read deals with types of society which came into existence fairly late in the group-development of the tool-using animal, man. The common feature of these recent societies is division into classes. This means not only division of labour but a basic tension deriving from the existence of two major sections whereof one produces a surplus controlled in some way by the other, usually by right of ownership under property relations enforced at the time by the particular collection of human beings. However, we know that (not only in general but specifically in India) there existed various aggregates of men and women before the period when any real surplus could have been produced, even before human beings became producers of the indispensable item, not obtainable as simply as air or water, namely food. That is, the food-gathering people who immediately preceded food-producers were also clustered together in what we would now call clan-units of several families, though the concept of family or individual parenthood had not then always developed.

This is known from two different sources. The first is tribal remnants, to be observed even today all over India, which (through inertia, tribal solidarity, common ritual) stubbornly remain food-gatherers.[1] Should increasing scarcity of unoccupied land, game, natural products, force them to drift into developed areas, they generally continue to gather food by begging or pilfering. The customs of such tribes show that they had formerly other methods of gathering food; they usually hunted or snared game, or grubbed in the forests. The tools these people use, unless forced by hunger to participate for a while in agricultural or other labour[2] are few and very simple. Though these implements are now of iron or steel, it is clear that the users themselves cannot manufacture their tools, nor could they possibly have manufactured them in the past without fundamental change in their manner of life. The modern, enveloping, far more advanced society furnishes both metal and tool. At this stage, the second source of information — archaeology — steps in to tell us that in digging up the past, we come down at a certain (variable) level to strata which show no metal tools at all. Yet, below the metal-age layers, there are clearly marked ancient deposits showing occupation by human beings who used stone tools: scrapers, cleavers, hand-axes, knife-like flakes, arrow-heads, microliths of not clearly proven use — all unquestionably the work of human hands. Many of these imply the additional use of wood, as for example the arrow-heads, or microliths that must have been sickle-teeth set in a wooden holder, others which might have been hafted or used to build up compound harpoon- or javelin-heads on a wooden base coated with gum. These archaeological strata are not easy to date absolutely,[3] but the layers give a well-defined chronological sequence; their collation over many different places is the basic method of studying pre-history;[4] both techniques were brought into archaeology from geology.

The general tool sequence, going down in space and back in time, gives the ages of steel, iron, bronze, copper-with-stone (chalcolithic), ground stone (neolithic), mesolithic, palaeolithic. The classification at the earliest stages is not uniform, while the application of European classification to India does not

seem always justified. The time scale at the oldest periods is very long. For India, the absence of extensive systematic exploration down to the virgin soil means a picture even more deficient and confused than elsewhere. There were social dead-ends without explanation; more primitive types sometimes succeeded relatively developed cultures; mixed offshoots of unknown origin reoccupied a site. The total material is scanty, particularly when infinite local variation over the vast size of the country is considered.[5] There is considerable overlap in techniques. In the peninsula, it would seem that the copper age was very brief; probably, in many parts, the people passed directly from the use of stone to that of iron. The granite and traprock of the Indian triangle that juts into the sea provide ample material for primitive tools, which can be picked up in profusion. In addition, there are good sources of iron in Dharwar type outcrops, where thick encrustations are to be found with little or no digging even today; these can be flaked off, roasted in a charcoal fire, hammered into tools or vessels. Such utensils may be purchased from this primitive local manufacture at Bhadrāvatī in Mysore, and Heḷvāk near Chipḷūṇ. The few tombs opened in the vast necropolis complex about Janampet [6] in Hyderabad show stone sarcophagi and and cists, but with iron tools. The earliest mining for gold at Kolar and in the galleries of exhausted gold working in Hyderabad was in the days of stone tools.

At places like Rohri [7] in upper Sind, extensive plots covered with flakes show the early manufacture of stone tools, indicating also some division of labour ; the toolmakers would probably have exchanged their products for other necessities instead of using them all personally. The abandoned granaries of Mysore state,[8] pits lined with huge, accurately dressed, thin but unpolished slabs of granite, seem to have continued in use till well into historic times, and could have been made when metals were in use — though generally only stone hammers and arrow-heads are found therein ; however, a cave [9] concealed within a huge boulder 26 miles out of Bangalore by the side of the road to Mysore contains large bars of iron, and was indubitably of ceremonial importance.

2.2. It is still not possible to establish a general sequence of development from the stone age down in the most densely settled areas, namely the Punjab, the Gangetic basin, the coastal strip of the peninsula. It will be shown later on that there were notable intrusions in each of these regions. Yet India shows extraordinary continuity of culture. The violent breaks known to have occurred in the political and theological superstructure have not prevented long survivals of observances that have no sanction in the official Brahmin works, hence can only have originated in the most primitive stages of human society ; moreover, the Hindu scriptures, and even more the observances sanctified in practice by brahminism, show adoption of non-brahmin local rites. That is, the process of assimilation was mutual, a peculiar characteristic of India. This has generally been completely neglected by those who take Sanskrit liturgical books as the basis of their study, creating a fictitious line of pseudo-historical descent from antiquity to modern times on the basis of such written works alone. In this "reasoning," it is ignored that the greater part of the population pays little attention to what the upper classes and their brahmin priests take as the 'pure' observances.

The casual use of stone tools does not necessarily imply a classless society, particularly in a country of enduring survivals like India. Stone axes were used by a few Saxons in the battle of Hastings. The great pre-conquest monuments of Mexico, Guatemala, Peru were built, like the greatest Egyptian pyramids, with stone tools, but copper was known, gold refined and accumulated in great quantity ; without plough agriculture, the south American societies developed a complicated ritual calendar, extensive human sacrifices, class division into nobility and workers, wars for new territory. Thus, it is essential to grasp the whole picture at any stage, rather than concentrate upon the tools of what might have been a hamlet of shepherds or tribesmen surviving in isolation when surrounding parts of the country had history in the textbook sense. In fact, the Punjab had gone through a cycle of urban civilization and decay, the Gangetic basin saw theological controversies and the rise of great empires, when the most primitive societies were the rule in the Indian peninsula. So, we have

to consider what pre-class social organization these early societies — early in the sense of means of production — manifested, which still survive among the less developed units, and have left their mark upon official 'Hinduism.'

Pre-class society was organised, when we can begin to speak of society at all, into tribes. Birth alone did not qualify the individual for full membership; some sort of initiation ceremony was necessary when the person came of age. For the tribesman, society as such began and ended with his tribe; members of other tribes were hardly recognized as human; at least, killing a stranger or robbing him was often a duty, not a crime as it would have been with a fellow-tribesman. However, a foreigner could be adopted into the tribe, with full membership rights. The tribe was subdivided into exogamous units, the clans which replaced what we would now call a family; the clan was further divided, when food was scarce, into groups of half a dozen households, or less, for gathering food. Each clan originally specialized in some particular food which was regarded as their very substance, and with which they had a peculiar unity. This being an edible fruit, insect, or animal, we find the tribal totem generally a tree or a living creature. It is even possible that tribes originated by the coalescence several clans (though a tribe could at times split into such units, the general trend was towards greater collectives), presumably on the basis of exchange of food products. At this stage, eating the particular totem animal or fruit becomes forbidden (*tabu*) to clansmen of that totem, except on ceremonial occasions. Some of the Toda chants have been changed quite recently, for example, as they originally meant sacrificing and eating buffaloes. The greatest modern general *tabu* of this sort (deriving from the pastoral age though intensified later as a basic tenet of Hinduism) is the absolute ban on beef-eating. About the same time, exchange of human beings between clans takes place with the food: primitive marriage, which means mating with another member or members of the tribe (endogamy) but outside the clan of the person mated (exogamy) which crystallizes the clan units. The first marriages were between groups, the first clans matriarchal, Descent and inheritance were in the mother's line, the father being of

no importance, often not even recognized as having any procreative function.[10] Matriarchal institutions still survive in those parts of the country that took last to the plough economy, e.g. Travancore-Cochin and among some tribesmen. The reason is that, originally, there existed no concept of property except for the few tools prepared by the individual, which supposedly contained some extension of his personality (*mana*). Land was territory, not property; game and food gathered was shared out to all. The first division of labour was between men and women; women were the first potters, basket-weavers, agriculturists — with hoe cultivation,[11] or the digging-stick (dibbler). Like pots and baskets for storage, the quern for milling also became necessary when cereals were a respectable source of food. But grain had to be produced, not merely gathered. The change to male dominance came only when the special property of men developed. Generally this meant cattle, which were first herded for meat, later for milk-products and skins (soon used in exchange); finally used as a source of power in agriculture and transport. During this process, people began to live more and more efficiently at the expense of their environment; man first produced a greater surplus by his labour than was necessary to support the individual producer himself. Thus patriarchy, individual property, class division became possible, though not always inevitable. A slave can herd the cattle, a slave is useful as ploughman. But slavery implies warfare, turning against other humans the arrows and harpoons used in hunting or fishing. The process was accelerated by the use of metals, particularly copper or bronze, which are scarce enough to remain a monopoly of a warrior class: the nobility or aristocrats. With iron, we have cheap metals, extensive agriculture, but also hard work for the majority of the population at whose expense a few live freed from the necessity to work, hence the bitter connotation of the 'Iron Age.' With regular agriculture, cattle manure fertilised land quickly exhausted by older tribal slash-and-burn cultivation; so permanent occupation of a field became the norm, tending towards private property in land. Nevertheless, a society may retain mixed customs if a new form of food-production does not become overwhelmingly preponderant.

For example, in some Bantu groups, the cattle are inherited in the male line, being herded by men, while the land (till recently cultivated only by women by use of weighted digging-sticks) is inherited in the female line.

The ideas of ritual and sacrifice also develop before classes, as first efforts on the part of mankind to control a mysterious environment beyond its logical and technical powers. Imitating the animals hunted led to better technique of the chase, but was visualized as sympathetic magic giving control over the animals; hunting scenes in our caves (Central India, Mirzapur) are not records but magic to increase the yield of actual hunts. Thus began religion, the dance, graphic art, poetry and music. Fire, which seems to have been used even by palaeolithic savages, was so difficult to generate, control, maintain that sacrifices were made to it, virgins dedicated to its use. The original idea of a sacrifice is not clear, but primitive man would have noted in his own way that it was the hind not eaten last season that produced another edible animal this year; the fat seeds cast away unconsumed sprouted the next grain crop. Thus, it is possible to interpret the origins of sacrifice as the primitive magic forerunner of systematic agriculture and animal-breeding. Why this should lead to mutilation of a finger, trephining pieces of bone from the skull, or ritual sacrifice of human beings is not known, though the magical powers of blood were generally admitted. With such fertility rites went orgiastic performances which now seem gross sensuality, but which must have been quite difficult in the days of a meagre diet and a bare, uncertain livelihood, and which were meant to stimulate nature to reproduce in sympathy. It seems ridiculous to us now to discover traces of fertility rites performed by European stone-age people for the increase of flints. There arose a mysterious dread of menstruation — the *tabu* upon a male touching, even by accident, the person or unwashed clothes of a woman in her courses still being universal in Indian villages — along with worship of the Mother Goddess, and of the moon whose cycle corresponds to the menstrual cycle of the human female. Sublimated into a mystical discipline, but with the gross, obscene, even gruesome ritual details written down as they were, the most primitive fertility

rites reappear as Tantric practices. A second, less important, group of rites is connected with death, visualized as the long sleep, or as return to the womb of the great mother, Earth; these concepts are reflected in burial customs. The crouched burial is often ambiguous, for early man slept in a crouch for warmth — as his poorer descendants continued to do for a long time — while burial in a pot of some sort is unmistakably return to the womb. With the discovery of ore-refining, cremation by the sacred fire was used to purify the unclean, fleshly portions of man, subject to decay; the residue was given urn-burial, or dropped into a sacred river as it is today. These are important for our purpose only when archaeology combines with ethnography to yield information about productive means and relations in some ancient culture. In later class society, these rituals often subsist in form, though the CONTENT is totally different. Generally, the immediate purpose in settled producing society is profit for the priest class, which insists that certain observances are necessary; at a deeper level, the unwieldy mass of ritual serves to petrify the later society, to discourage innovation, to help preserve the class structure and the *status quo*. This is also the reason why some communities still remain atrophied as food-gatherers. In the earlier stage, the priest was either the tribal chief, head of a clan, or a specially dedicated medicine man, for patriarchal groups; a goddess-chief-priestess or member of a sisterhood, with matriarchy.

2.3. There are still, in India, visible remnants of tribal society which seem most impressive — to casual observers — only in marginal, undeveloped areas. The little province of Assam has not less than 175 languages and dialects, each spoken by a small tribal group which also preserves its own customs and structure. Some of these, like the Nagas, Abors, Garos, have been studied by ethnographers. A few have begun to demand the right of self-determination. Some practise head-hunting, others combine the pastoral life with small agriculture, a goodly number have drifted into the casual-labour market. In the jungle belts of central and coastal India, down to the Nilgiris and Malabar, are to be found other tribal remnants: Munda, Oraon, Bhil, Todas, Kadar. All of these are now

peaceful ; the few occasionally turbulent ones like the Santals and Bhils were ground down long ago by superior armament ; all are primitive. What has fossilized them is refusal of each tiny splinter to take to regular food production, to acknowledge and utilize the productive systems of encircling society. They cling desperately to primitive outward forms of the superstructure as well as to the food-gathering basis, for their superstitions weld them together to the old life. Yet it is not only in these deeply forested portions of India that the mark of tribal society is found. In every locality, even in the neighbourhood of well-developed modern cities, one finds little bands of tribal people holding on to whatever they can of their ancient customs, under constant suspicion by the police and heavy pressure of the more advanced elements of society which live by a money economy. A striking feature of these groups is the relation between their social and economic status, both of which rise together whenever they participate in social production to the extent of becoming property owners. The refusal to produce anything useful for general society beyond the tribe entails rough treatment as potentially criminal elements. THE ENTIRE COURSE OF INDIAN HISTORY SHOWS TRIBAL ELEMENTS BEING FUSED INTO A GENERAL SOCIETY. This phenomenon, which lies at the very foundation of the most striking Indian social feature, namely caste, is also the great basic fact of ancient Indian history. The different methods whereby the tribal elements were formed into a society or absorbed into preexisting society are prime ethnic material for any real historian.

Extensive observations of this sort will take us far beyond the scope of the present work, as well as beyond any reasonable allotment of space. However, one of the purposes of this book is to stimulate the reader to make parallel studies of his own, to gather information which industrialization will soon efface beyond recovery in the absence of written records. So, let me take the reader on a brief tour beyond my house on the boundary of Poona city. This region is a little valley bounded by the land of the Law College (which teaches post-British law in English), the Bhāṇḍārkar Oriental Research Institute (whose collection of Sanskrit MSS and edition of the *Mahābhārata* are known all over the world), the Fergusson College,

several country houses of Bombay millionaires, and a modern state sheep-breeding farm run on scientific lines with imported as well as indigenous strains (cross-bred without in the least affecting the livestock bred or purchased by local farmers, peasantry, butchers). The examples furnished by this restricted but intensive study will illustrate the methods of chapter I, while yielding valuable clues to be used silently in later chapters; the difference between the locality selected and any other in India will be primarily of detail, not of substance. In each case, it will be possible to see the interaction of obsolete with modern forms of society, to see historical processes illustrated, as well as ethnic groups that have survived the process.

Nearest to me in location are a tent-dwelling nomadic group of Rās Phāse Pārdhis whose basic costume (for the men) is a simple loin-cloth, who never take a bath, but who retain the natural cleanliness, mobility, superior senses of wild animals. They have six exogamous clans or septs whose names have become surnames of feudal Marāṭhā families: Bhonsale, Powār, Cavhāṇ, Jādhav, Śinde, Kāḷe. The last is actually a Citpāvan brahmin surname; the penultimate once denoted 'son of a slave-girl' (without acknowledged father) till it was ennobled by rising to the kingdom of Gwālior. That the names were acquired during the period of Marāṭhā dominance follows from the speech of the tribe, a Gujarāthī dialect. Besides begging and petty stealing, these Pārdhīs are expert bird-snarers. They still worship a mother-goddess, though the main image now is an embossed silver plate simulating brahmin images; some of them identify it with the Devī of Tuḷjāpūr. It is the function of the clan chief or head of a band to dance before the goddess on ceremonial occasions, but to do so, he has to wear a woman's skirt and shoulder-cloth, of design not known in this part of the country, and certainly not worn by women of the tribe. "Then I *am* the goddess!" says he; the emphatic claim has to be substantiated during the dance (in front of the rest of the band which sings the accompaniment to the dancer) by an ordeal, usually plunging of the right hand into boiling oil. Such is the state of ecstasy that the priest-chief does not feel the oil, nor is any mark left on his skin thereafter;

should the hand fester, it would be proof that the goddess had rejected priest or rite. The chant may continue for three days, accompanied by the sacrifice most beloved of the goddess, that of a bull calf, or buffalo calf. Clearly, the ceremonial, whose avowed purpose is increase of game and food, was taken over by the men from the women, though the clans are now patriarchal like the surrounding society. Original matriarchy is further proven by the heavy bride-price [12] which has still to be paid, as much as 800 to 1000 rupees, to the father of the bride ; the poorer the father, the greater the bride-price. The money is earned by casual labour or the sale of game and wild fruit, for they beg scraps for their own food, paying neither rent nor taxes. These illiterate tribesmen charge a heavy interest, 25% per annum (expressed as 'twenty for sixteen'); refusal to repay may lead to a quarrel. One in 1954 ended in two murders. Even then they refused to give evidence before the police ; the whole clan or group of clans met in private council (*sabhā*) before the general chief (*paṭel*) to try the case as usual. Evidence being given, the culprit denied his guilt, so ordeal by red-hot iron or boiling oil was offered. He refused, was taken as guilty, and sentenced accordingly. Now a dead body is *tabu* for the tribe. If anyone dies in a settlement, the body is abandoned *in situ* whenever possible ; the whole group of tented families decamps in hasty flight. Hence no one can execute a great offender directly ; at most, his hands and feet are hacked off, and he is left to die in the jungle. Since the police make this procedure difficult today, the offender could defy tribal law ; so the tribe is breaking up on the belief that the virtue has gone out of their gods because the ancient way of the gods (i.e. tribal custom) is no longer being followed. There never was any question of *racial* purity, for strangers used to be adopted into a clan on payment of a fee. The real basic reason for their new willingness to abandon tribal life is its impossibility : game has almost vanished, while none of them can afford a hunting license. Unwilling though they be to work steadily, the alternative is starvation, for beggary daily becomes more and more uncertain. Soon, the remnants must find jobs — the superior eyesight and hearing which makes them so good at snaring quail and pilfer-

ing their neighbours' poultry at night also makes them excellent watchmen. However the Pārdhīs cannot hunt anything bigger than a hare, for they have no weapons. They use a simple knife, shaped like a shoemaker's, to make beautiful collapsible snares in light wooden frames, yet neglect the use of other tools or weapons, not practising archery, basket-making, pottery, leather work or agriculture. Their tents are of canvas which is bought, though originally they made their shelters out of stalks of sorghum. The cattle used to move their goods, and for stalking or driving birds into snares, are a peculiarly scrawny breed, fed by trespass, unfit for agriculture, yielding hardly enough milk to keep the calf alive. That is, they have absorbed a great deal from their environment, except ownership of land or the essential means of production, thus affording excellent proof of our thesis that man makes himself. If recent attempts at settling them succeed, they will be merged into the proletariat. They are about to pass from a small group living at the expense of society into the larger group at whose expense society lives.

Three adjacent tribal splinters in the same place afford strong contrast. Of these, the Rāmośīs, a lot of some 20 houses, were settled on *inām* land about 1830, at which period they were wild tribal brigands ; they remain a distinct caste today but are not to be distinguished from the general Marāṭhā peasant in appearance, language, or religious observances; they live by use of plough and harrow, keep milch cattle. A group of Vaidūs form a separate village just beyond. Originally tribal hunters, still addicted to strong drink and the chase, they have become something like a guild of wealthy drug-vendors who sell their simples and secret remedies to the gullible, making good money, increased by catching live cobras (*nāga*) for display at festivals. Though tough, insolent, and willing to fight, they are proud of their reputation for never stealing anything ; proud also of their solid-looking, though badly built, unsanitary, individually owned houses. Their original language is a dialect of Telugu, still used among themselves. They have their own goddess and a characteristic form of (crouched) burial, in a sitting posture, Indian style, with legs crossed. An empty space is left in the grave-pit, in front

of the corpse's head, obviously for breathing ; food is placed once a year on the cairn above the pit. The burial form resembles* that of southern megalithic tombs and cists. Because individuals trade for private gain as far away as Bombay, they have neither chief nor guild-structure, but remain a guild-like closed caste group. Another neighbouring Telugu-speaking tribal unit which has similarly become a quasi-guild are the Vaḍḍars, now masons who shape the stone blocks used in construction work. Their women (like those of Pārdhīs and Vaidūs but not Rāmośīs) still wear the simple one-piece tribal dress, daily collecting brushwood, thorn-scrub, or twigs for fuel, as they once did in the jungle ; the men have adopted the general lower middle class dress (cap, shirt and *dhoti*) being individually contractors for dressing stone, though they have not learned to use the fair sums of money earned thereby to improve their hygiene or standard of living. A generation ago, their chief was the foreman through whom all contracts and payments were made (as with poorer Vaḍḍar labour gangs in Bombay city). He disbursed the money as he liked, according to the needs of each family. The lands the chief

* The resemblance is increased by a dab of lime (*cunā*) or minium on the forehead, or at times on the shoulders of the deceased among the more conservative Vaidūs. Megalithic cists and pit-circles (*AIA*. 192, 196) show the use of lime to seal the entrance. The nearest modern custom seems to be among the Mahārs, who often sprinkle the ground above a burial with lime. The central stone of the burial cairns generally erected by Māṇg-Gāruḍīs and also by Mahārs is coated either with red lead, or lime, the coat renewed periodically. Red pigment of some sort (*gulāl*, *kuṃkum*) is sprinkled on the corpse, on the way to the burning ground, by several higher castes, but the direct use of lime seems unknown. Though only children, and those not regularly, are inserted in pots before burial by some of the lowest castes, the presence of potters to officiate or to assist at the funeral (sometimes at weddings also) is so common all over India in spite of brahminisation of most ritual that it should be connected with ancient urn-burials. On the other hand, burial is cheaper than cremation so that the burial of those who die of smallpox, leprosy, and some epidemics, or throwing them in rivers may have been thrust upon some of the cremating castes by poverty, just as the richer among originally burying castes tend to cremate their dead. Sitting burial is known also among some subcastes of the Mahārs, who otherwise bury the dead in the recumbent position. The lime has, presumably, some purificatory significance.

acquired in his own name out of this money led to quarrels. A housing co-operative was ultimately formed from the disgorged resources which the foreman-chief had tried to appropriate for himself as his own, private, bourgeois property. Money earned in respectable amounts by individual mason-Vaḍḍar households has dissolved the guild completely except for endogamy (quite unlike the Pārdhīs, whose money is not used for purchasing food) so that we have now a caste group. The adjacent branch of the Vaḍḍars, the diggers (whose ancestors roved all over the country and dug water-tanks for every U. P. village), have dissolved by decay, employment being scarce ; and the particular group survives by bootlegging, prostitution, and odd jobs. They live in the most wretched hovels, almost as close to subsistence level as do the Pārdhīs. The sole reminder of their tribal origin is the solidarity they display against any prying stranger, particularly the police or an owner of the land upon which they squat without permission. Registered as municipal voters, they receive protection because of their value as a voting bloc of respectable size for political chicanery. Other semi-mobile Vaḍḍar groups about Poona are better workers, though in a stage of direct transition from tribe-caste to industrial proletariat. These settlements are now degenerating into slums, a problem for the Poona municipality complicated by the lack of employment, unwillingness on the part even of Vaidūs and mason-Vaḍḍars to pay taxes for such fripperies as drainage and water, ritual inability of the Pārdhīs to pitch their tents in any manner except in a single row facing east. The *inām* land of the Rāmośīs were acquired during the slum-clearance scheme, without giving them other sources of livelihood, whence their case is no better, in essence. Poona is an important military headquarters so that an observer may be disconcerted by primitive inability to understand how an unoccupied, untilled piece of land could have an owner, while modern bombers roar overhead in practice flights ; or have his photograph of a crude Vaḍḍar temple-hut of the Seven Mothers ruined by the dust raised as a heavy tank rumbles across the line of focus.

Interesting as these cases are for the sociologist, their importance to us lies in illustrating the passage from tribe

to guild and caste, which is a main feature of historical progress all over India. Group-competitions by riddles are practised on special days by the Kātkari tribesmen. Defeat must, at one time, have entailed severe penalties or sacrifice. This is known from the *Mbh.-Jāt* stories of *yakṣa* questions, where failure to rede the riddle meant death (as with the Sphinx). Peasant surnames in Mahārāṣṭra show that clan-totemic *devaks* survive after the tribe has dissolved and merged into caste or subcaste. Totemic observances become family *vratas* just as the clan name turns into a surname. For example, many peasants of the surname Paḍvaḷ will not eat the snake-gourd that their name signifies; peacock flesh is specially tabu for the Mores, goat for the Śelārs, the *catura* bird for the Catures: Goḍāmbes cannot use mango firewood, and must worship a mango-branch every *bali-pratipadā* day &c. &c. Details of the assimilation must vary, according to the productive structure of contemporary society of the day into which such tribal units were absorbed. For example, tea plantations, factories, or regularly paid services are modern developments which were not available say in 400 A. D. as media for assimilation of tribesmen. The newly absorbed people generally preserved some unity, forming a unit of production which manifested itself as a new caste-group. At bottom, however, the causes remain the same: food production is more efficient than food-gathering, the settled agrarian method of life less uncertain than tribal hunting and scavenging off the products of nature which left man decidedly more helpless in his struggle with the environment. When (June 1955) the Pārdhīs referred to were provisionally assigned 2500 square feet of state land per family, they immediately began to cultivate small vegetable patches of their own, for the first time. When some violent neighbour claimed the land as his own, they found money to pay him rent — till a higher official intervened. Regular employment has now started them on the way to becoming new people, regular members of society. It is expected that the change may even lead to their use of soap!

2.4. The gods worshipped by the people have their own story to tell, which we might again study over the same terrain, for example. The oldest surviving temple ruin in Poona

is of a 13th century Yādava structure (at the end of the old Dagḍī-pūl causeway). The *dargāh* of Sheikh Salla has been constructed with its stones and over its remains. Some of the stone pillars are visible in the tomb, the pedestals of wooden columns being seen in the courtyard. The original temple must have been wrecked by the soldiery of Alā'-ud-dīn Khaljī early in the 14th century. At Pātāḷeśvar (=the god of the Underworld) behind the central meteorological observatory, is an unfinished 9th century cave temple of Śiva, wherein the phallic symbol was installed only a generation ago; some of the floor was trimmed down (although the cave is a "protected monument") as late as 1946 by the donation of a generous wartime black-marketeer and contractor. Nānā Phaḍanavīs once took refuge from pursuers in these caves, towards the end of the Peshwā period, according to tradition. The considerable amount of stone excavated for the cave formed a little hillock by the side of the cave, was covered over by wind-blown dust, on which grew some trees. Today, there is a prosperous, well-endowed, popular temple on the artificial hillock in memory of a 19th century hermit who lived and died there and is now revered as Janglī Mahārāj. Behind the Fergusson college, but on its land, are five more caves, originally Buddhist (like the caves at Kārle and Bhājā 40 miles away and the intermediate Tukārāma caves at Śelārwaḍī) monastic structures converted at the turn of the century into a temple containing several distinct cult-images. Till 1930, they occasionally sheltered vagrants, thieves, counterfeiters. On the other side of the valley mouth is the Catuḥśṛṅgī temple, near which are the traces of some abortive caves. None of these furnish any real information for us, though they would be the first seen by an archaeologically-minded visitor. We must turn to simpler cults.

A hundred yards or so from my house, at the corner of a new house-plot, is a cluster of stones and brick-mortar lumps daubed with red pigment, occasionally renewed by unknown worshippers who pay homage to this almost forgotten "Vetāḷa." As late as 1939, these were under a striking, ancient, gnarled Bor (*Zizyphus jujuba*) tree to which a goat or fowl was occasionally sacrificed. The tree has disappeared; the owner of the newly constructed house took the precaution of moving the

cult objects only a few feet, with all due respect. Going near the Vaidu settlement in the valley beyond, one finds a similar aggregate of stone red-coated, with a crude stone lamp-housing; the central stone — as shapeless as all the others which are "attendants" — is worshipped as Lāḍubāī (the Dear Lady) by an aged peasant whose great-grandfather brought the cult from eastern parts of the Deccan where it is commoner. Between this and my house are other cult objects, of which the most prominent is a Vetāḷa cacodaemon on an unroofed platform near the Rāmośī settlement. This baetylic (no etymological connection necessary with Vetāḷa) stone looks like the phallic symbol of Śiva. The resemblance is heightened by a small stone Nandī bull in front; unlike the normal Śiva cult, however, both the bull and the Vetāḷa stone are completely coated with red. The site held a small temple of the feudal period, probably a funerary monument to some fallen warrior of the Peshwas. The temple must have succeeded an original Vetāḷa cult but was allowed to lapse into ruin. Two small, unidentifiably blurred, many-armed, relief images of the god and goddess survive to one side on a little heap of the temple masonry, again slightly daubed with red, while a much larger relief Hanumān (monkey-faced god) with sword and shield — which show it to have marked a dead warrior's monument — faces the images, with the much more thorough coating of red that goes with all Hanumān images which are worshipped by themselves. For that matter, the converted monastic caves of the Fergusson college hill received a new Hanumān, carved deeply over an older Hanumān in low relief (to the left of the main entrance) only in the year 1943.

To this particular Vetāḷa, animal (fowl or goat) sacrifices are made on any no-moon (*amāvāsyā*) date, less often on a full-moon calendar day (*pūrṇimā*). Though the animal is cut up, cooked, and eaten by the sacrificers (mostly wrestlers from Poona city who thus try to ensure victory in a future bout, or pay off a former vow) in front of the image, a small spot of the fresh blood may be placed on the Vetāḷa stone itself. The sacrifice is known to be received by this 'younger brother' on behalf of an "elder brother," also a Vetāḷa on the hill in the background. This older Vetāḷa stands at the junc-

tion of the territories of five villages right on top of a hump on the hilltop plateau (altitude 2365 ft., behind the National Chemical Laboratory) having an open shrine 38′ x 22′ with a roof of corrugated galvanized iron and surrounding dry-stone walls 3 feet high, on three sides. The sanctuary was roofed only after the first world war by a grateful but unthinking veteran whose family — as the villagers narrate with gloomy pride — has since been wiped out by the well-meant sacrilege, for a Vetāḷa proper must be open to the sky. About the main demon is a collection of over 50 stones more or less daubed with red, his army (*senā*), a few being in the sanctuary. Some receive a dab of lime on top of the red. Many bells once hung from the roof-beams, for use by worshippers to announce their arrival, but have with one exception been stolen and sold during the metal scarcity of the second world war, as was the fine bell of the " younger brother " in the valley. Once, for a brief period, a terrifying image of clay in human form covered the cult stone (as it does in the Vetāḷa temple in the city), but was destroyed by irate devotees. The primitive stone about 50 cm. in height, flat and slightly pointed at the top but almost phallic in shape, stands exposed in its primitive simplicity, partly set in natural rock and partly in a stone masonry pedestal about 5½ feet square. The aniconic image has a pair of eyes which are not in the stone, but in the red coat which has reached a thickness of about 30 millimetres. Sacrifices are occasionally made here too by those who do not mind the hard walk up a steep hill and a couple of miles into the scrub jungle. The spot seemed to have a surprising sanctity, for on *Caitra* (April) full-moon, the Vetāḷa's birthday (any Vetāḷa's, not only of this particular one), many people come to worship from a considerable distance; not only villagers, but solid bourgeois, even a fat, English-speaking official could be seen struggling breathlessly up the hill with four gallons of water in a copper vessel, and flowers, to give the god a bath followed by another coat of red lead in oil, and to perform the rites of worship.

Certainly, this Vetāḷa has seniority over the middle-class Hanumān shrine established by the Law college about 1934, over a feebler Vetāḷa under a specially planted *vaḍa* tree and a *Māṅg Ceḍā* which consists of about two dozen lime-daubed

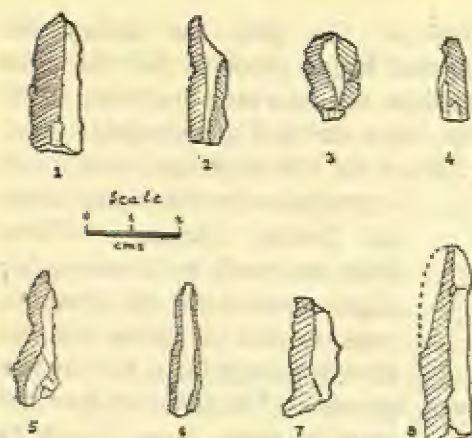


Fig. 1. Quartzite microliths, surface finds about Poona ; 3 and 5 carnelian, 4 agate, rest chalcedony.

stones which guarantee the destruction of an enemy, if the enemy's name be pronounced with imprecations while turning the stones over — all on the same hill near-by. When I learned that at least two murders had been committed there since 1925 to avenge blood-feuds, the victims having been caught at a distance,

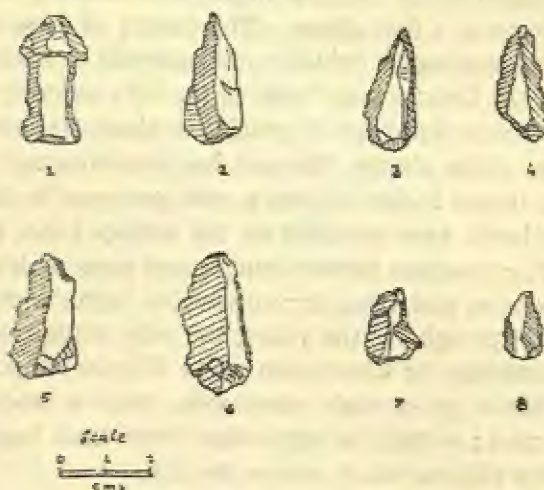


Fig. 2. Microliths from Poona river sand ; 5 and 7 carnelian, rest chalcedony ; 1 is a unique tanged arrowhead.

probably killed in front of the god, the bodies left within the enclosure, it seemed highly probable that the place had associations far above those due to a mere boundary deity. Looking about the hilltop, there emerged a remarkable fact : small stone tools (Figs. 1-3) of the late stone age, were found in profusion on the hump, about the Vetāḷa sanctuary. These flakes are made by knocking the angles successively off prismatic cores, so that the under side has always a single facet, the top two or more. The material does not occur in pieces large enough to permit larger tools, but the flakes are as sharp as slivers of glass. The technique requires much more co-ordination of eye and hand, with delicacy of touch, than is evident at a first glance. The density of these artifacts of chalcedony and agate (which occur naturally in narrow veins throughout the Deccan trap basalt of the hill) suddenly rises to at least ten times that beyond a radius of about 50 metres from the Vetāḷa. Quite clearly, the spot has late stone age associations. My guess is that it was a cult-spot even in the stone age, when herds were pastured on the hilltop (also, cf. *IAR*. 1955, p. 59, connection between temple and stone tools ignored) as they are now, and when agriculture first began with digging stick or light plough. In the valley, the only fertile soil is very heavy, resembling the Chernozem of the Ukraine, impossible to plough without six or eight oxen, even when a modern steel plough is used ; so the first agriculture must have been on the long, narrow plateau which crowns the hill.



Fig. 3. Quartzite cores (3 carnelian) from which microliths have been flaked off.

This was supported by the next similar hump (altitude 2404 ft.) about five miles away on the same meandering hilltop plateau, with a little shrine of Bhairava built in feudal times. The main Bhairava shrine has moved down to the lower level of the present village of Bāvadhān, though it is recognized that the hilltop god is the original. This parallels the " brother " Vetāḷas of the first valley. Moreover, on the hilltop, about the

Bhairava shrine, the density of surface finds of quartzite artifacts is again markedly above that elsewhere on the hill. In all probability, the tools were made there or brought for exchange, presumably for ultimate use by sacrificers. There is the additional possibility that these spots were the sites of primitive settlements which later moved into the valleys as agriculture developed. In any case, we have a whole series of such cults in Mahārāṣṭra, better known, with much larger temples (which inhibit archaeology !) on similar hill plateaus. The nearest to Poona city is the Parvatī temple, now dedicated to fashionable brahmin gods, but many others are known which retain more primitive deities slightly brahminized, to whom an annual blood sacrifice is made either directly, or through a representative subordinate deity. Much more field work is needed before such problems can be settled. The two spots in question have little soil over the rock, hence digging will lead to nothing more. No remains of housing seem to exist, for the hilltop has no springs or convenient sources of water. No pottery is to be found except some of recent manufacture, mostly from bootleggers' stills, for which the humps provide an ideal lookout, sometimes kept by some holy unshaven fakir dressed in dirty saffron robes who gains cash from the illicit partnership, not to speak of the merit for serving the forest god. This part of the country seems to have jumped straight from the stone into the iron age at a fairly late date, without any marked chalcolithic intermediary, for no copper tools are found ; the iron could be roasted out of encrustations not too far away, as explained earlier. There are no handy copper deposits, while major trade routes passing through Poona seem comparatively recent, probably after the coastal strip was developed.

2.5 In another direction, this investigation of gods and cults which led us to archaeological discovery shows contact with the written records, so many of which remain theological in India. The lower deities are indistinguishable from each other except by information obtained from the worshippers. Vetāḷa (Skt *Vetāla*, Hindi *Betāl*), Mhasobā (a demon), Kāḷubāī (the Black Lady, the general mother goddess which later

becomes Kālī, consort of Śiva), *Mariammā (goddess of death by cholera) are all coated with red and look alike to the eye, which cannot even tell whether the stone is a god or goddess. The last, for example, is worshipped primarily by the lowly untouchable Māṅg caste (who seem to be descended from the Mātaṅga tribe of history) still very close to the tribal state in many ways; the particular shrine receives gifts and surreptitious worship from higher castes, though a Bābūḷ (*Acacia arabica* or *A. Ferruginea*) tree associated with it was cut down by the landlord, who needed the space to build a wall, compensating the goddess by construction of a small brick masonry shrine, without coming to any harm. For that matter, other tree-deities are much more common. The Pipal (*Ficus religiosa*) has been worshipped throughout India with unbroken continuity from prehistory, long before the Buddha found enlightenment beneath its boughs. The local name for the god of the Pipal tree is *muñjābā*, specially a god of small children before investiture. The *Vaḍa* (*Ficus Bengalensis*) is associated with the devoted Sāvitrī who reclaimed her husband from Death, hence becomes the patron deity of all good wives. These two wild fig trees were edible totems, like the tastier and more digestible Udumbara (*Ficus Glomerata*) of the same class. We know this from names like *Paippalāda* = Pipal-eater. *Audumbara* = descendants of Udumbara marks a well-known historical tribe whose coins bear the mark of that sacred tree. Among prophylactic deities is Gourābā, goddess of measles, which is the standard flat aniconic stone, coated for once with turmeric as well as the red pigment. Sītalādevī (the cool goddess) is the deity of smallpox (usually just river-quartz, which was used to cool the patient before the days of ice-packs) with shrines in every village, and over a score in Poona which is a city grown out of many villages; as she now receives gifts from devout mothers on the tenth or twelfth day

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* A comic, unintentional, but historically justified tribute was paid to this goddess at Calicut by Vasco da Gama and his companions. They entered the local Mariammā temple, were sprinkled with holy water by the priests, genuflected before the image, under the impression that they were paying homage to the Virgin Mary. Only João de Sala, of all the company, had any misgivings about the performance (*Var.* intr. lvi).

after vaccination, she may be considered an effective protector against the disease, especially by people who have never heard of Jenner and to whom the vaccination is just a new-fangled blood-rite. Every lane in Poona has such cults by the dozen; many of the temples grew out of family gods set up by the brahmins who were attracted to the city in the palmy days of the Peshwas, while the cruder gods continue side by side. Occasionally, a local cult is assimilated to or may have developed from the documented gods of the pantheon; for example, the major Mahārāṣṭrian deity Viṭhobā is taken to be a form of Viṣṇu, his consort Rakhumāī equated to Lakṣmī.

To return to the Vetāḷa, we find that he is a goblin throughout classical Sanskrit literature, a demoniac creature of some kind; the Vikrama cycle of legends contains him as a prominent actor. Śiva, with whom he has iconographic similarities, is the lord of all goblins (*bhūteśa*), as is any senior Vetāḷa of longer standing; but neither Śiva's image nor the phallic symbol are normally found coated with the red* minium pigment. Bhairava, whom we have seen in parallel location to the Vetāḷa, is of the same substance (*aṃśa*) as Śiva, and a death-god (as are Śiva proper and the Vetāḷa too) able to receive sacrifices. Śiva, however, is married to the mother goddess Kālī or Durgā (daughter of the mountain) who also loses her red coat with her independence though she retains her blood-sacrifices in many places. The god Hanumān, here called Mārutī (son of

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* A local tiger-cult Vāghobā is to be seen on the divide between Pimplolī village and Beḍsā. The aniconic image is round and socketed, like a Śiva phallus, but coated with a thick layer of minium into which two eye-sockets have been pressed. A stone Nandi bull stands in front of the god, as for Śiva's symbol, but his genealogy is explained in the present case by dozens of tiny stone bull-figures, in serried ranks, all facing the god. It is fairly obvious that the original practice was of sacrificing a bull regularly to the tiger-god; this was replaced by the stone votive bull figurines. Later, the assimilation to Śiva would take place under brahmin influence, with the diminution of tigers which further reduced depredations of livestock grazing in the forest. In Bhorghāt, on the other hand, the corresponding cult is of the tiger-goddess Vāgh-jāī (elsewhere one of the 'seven sisters'); she has acquired a quite recent closed temple, with bells, fashionable worship, and gifts from travellers on the Bombay-Poona highway which passes close by.

the wind-god), receives independent worship among the peasantry, and is then covered with red lead like all the lower cult-objects. He is also a celibate death-god, being often located near burning ghats (like Śiva or Bhairava) with a special rite to be performed before him when the corpse is taken past for cremation. It is remarkable that he is totemic, with the face and tail of a monkey; but like the Vetāḷa he is a special god of the wrestlers (who were once professional warriors too) with the same birthday as the Vetāḷa. Worshippers find it difficult to explain this last fact except by making him a brother, alternate form, or of the same substance (*aṃśa*) as the Vetāḷa proper, yet not of Śiva or Bhairava. In the greater temples, Hanumān becomes a humble devotee of Rāma, before whom he bends with hands joined in adoration. The iconography is explained by the Rāmāyaṇa epic, where Hanumān appears as the loyal monkey servant of Rāma, helping the incarnation of Viṣṇu to recover the abducted heroine, Sītā. The god of the peasants is transformed into a servitor to the god of the landlords, who (as Rāma) was himself originally worshipped in the north by the local peasantry; at this stage, it is notable that Hanumān also loses his red coating.

As one rises in the scale, the icons become better sculpture, correlated to theology while the red coat disappears. The highest god of the Hindu pantheon to be coated officially with the red pigment is Gaṇeśa, the elephant-headed god, son of Durgā — but not of Śiva, if his *purāṇa* be studied closely. He is the patron god of scribes. He is also the creator and remover of all evil obstacles, great or small, hence the adoption into Śiva's family is pure syncretism whereby an independent cult was assimilated. Precisely the same action is visible with regard to Śiva's bull *Nandī* who was worshipped by himself a couple of thousand years at least before neolithic savages had heard of Śiva. The beast, normally vehicle of Śiva, is stated explicitly by the Linga-purāṇa to be Śiva's active principle, so really his totem. The cobra which encircles Śiva's neck, raises his hood over Śiva's phallic emblem, and upon whom Viṣṇu reclines in enduring sleep is another object of primitive worship quietly absorbed into different, complex religious cults. We know just what the red coating *sindūra* (red oxide of

lead) means in the case of Gaṇeśa, for his saga tells us that the elephant-headed god killed a demon (*asura*) called Sindūra, bathed in his blood with great delight; hence he must be given the coating of *sindūra* as blood substitute. That the red pigment is substitute for the magical respiratory substance of life, blood, could have been guessed from other observations on blood sacrifices (never made to Gaṇeśa) but is here explicitly recorded. The senior god of Poona is the Gaṇeśa of Kasbā Peṭh (the oldest part of the city), whose image is lost beneath a very thick coating of *sindūra* (probably over 150 millimetres in thickness) into which two silver eyes are set, like the oculi of the Vetāḷa or of any primitive neolithic image. The first invitation has to be sent to him whenever a Poona wedding is announced. The priesthood is divided among the members of a single family. Numerous gifts, income from the miserable advertising which covers the outer wall (as of almost every other Poona temple in this bourgeois age) and rent from estates assigned to the temple and shop-stalls within the enclosure make the share of each priest quite respectable. The senior goddess of Poona, whose cult is similarly fashionable (and lucrative to the priests) is Jogeśvarī, before whom an endless stream of visitors pays tribute (cash, flowers, coconuts) from five o'clock in the morning when she wakes, is dressed and fed, to nearly midnight, when she is officially put to bed. The worshippers see only a demure silver mask peeping out from the folds of a cloth garment. But on no-moon dates, unbreakable custom demands that the goddess be not dressed so that the original image of a squat, long-armed, though not naked mother-goddess figure in crude relief becomes visible; tradition significantly requires the renewal on this lunar date of the red pigment with which the real image is coated. Thus the deity has been brought to respectability from a far more primitive cult figure, retaining only a memory of the original blood sacrifices. She is still without a consort, though for a while a Mahādeva (Śiva) image was established as her husband and may still be seen demoted, unworshipped, to a corner of the temple enclosure. Other mother-goddess images of developed form persist in the Kasbā, called merely *devī* (= the goddess), or as with two images dedicated by the brass-copper workers (*kāsāra*),

Kālikā ; in the latter case, the red pigment appears only on the forehead as the mark of a married woman. However, the *Kālikā-purāṇa* (written between 500 and 1000 A. D. ; whereof see section 71, st. 18-19, 114-16) tells us that the goddess takes particular delight in blood sacrifices, especially that of a human victim. That is, the complicated brahmin pantheon conceals beneath its endless superstition the effort to assimilate and to civilize the most primitive and gruesome cults, without destroying them,[13] just as the people were assimilated without violent conflict. To this day, at the foot of the ornate Parvatī temple, built at the height of Peshwa glory, one sees a primitive Mhasobā being worshipped. It is as if the original neolithic cult of the spot were still practised in front of a Christian church of central Europe. This tolerance characteristic of Indian development has a deep basis in the historical changes which took place in the means and relations of production. When local gods were adopted as relatives, attendants, incarnations, variants of brahmin deities, while the locality coincided with or developed into a centre of production, or of trade, there arose great religious pilgrimage centers like Banāras, Mathurā, and Nāsik.

2.6. The following examples may be cited from the village handbooks published by the Bombay government as based upon the 1941 census ; the name of the village is followed by Tālukā and district in brackets, then by the population, approximate month of the annual festival (always determined by the lunar calendar) and figures of estimated attendance :

Vivaḷvedhe (Ḍahāṇu, Thāṇā)	286	Fair for goddess Mahālakṣmī,		45,000
Mhase (Mūrbāḍ, Thāṇā)	539	(tribal 159)	January	50,000
Saptashringī-Gaḍ (Koḷwaṇ Nāsik)	155	(tribal 53)	April	50,000
Naitaḷe (Niphāḍ, Nāsik),	778	'Maḷolias,'	January,	50,000
Wārkheḍ (Newāsa, Ahmednagar)	641	For goddess Lakṣmī,	April,	50,000
Yerad (Pāṭaṇ, Sātārā)	898	God Yerḍobā, April,		100,000

Some of these have the added functional attraction of a cattle show or agricultural products, as at Mahāl-Bāgāyat (Bijāpūr) ; others are now joined to the memory of a saint like the Yamanur (Navalguṇḍ, Dhārwār) Urus in March, honouring the Peer Rāje Bakshar with an attendance of 100,000.

The Āḷandī fair near Poona gathers well over 100,000 in November, perhaps in memory of the deified saint Jñāneśvar. Yet the much more popular saint, Tukārām, is honoured at Dehū a few miles up the same little river in November and February by meetings of no more than 20,000 each. So it seems highly probable that the sanctity of Āḷandī derives from some archaic cult, and not merely from Jñāneśvar. Such festivals allow us to trace the main course of agriculture when cereals became the prime means of sustenance, cultivation having to move down from the hilltops to the river valleys. The tribal origin of these festivals is suggested by the fairs in settlements that are still tribal (apart from the semi-tribal Mhase above):

Akalkuwā Budrukh (Mewāsī, W. Khāndesh)	197	February	15,000
Maṇibeli (same section)	198	April	16,000
Muḷgī (same section)	681	March	10,000
Sāraṅgkheḍe (Shahāḍā, E. Khāndesh)	2091 (tribal 287),	December	50,000

The point is that leaving tribal life for agriculture would mean a great increase of population. If the change were peaceful, the old gods in the agreed cult-spots would still be remembered and worshipped at the great annual festivals, though every village has its red-daubed stones for normal cult purposes. Not all the fair-spots remain little villages to which pilgrims gather with the utmost discomfort. Paṇḍharpūr has developed into the official center of Vaiṣṇava sanctity in Mahārāṣṭra though the god Viṭhobā, as remarked above, seems to have been a local deity assimilated to Viṣṇu. The place is at the intersection of old trade routes. The older pilgrimage foci have their importance (*māhātmya*) sanctified by interpolation into the *Mahābhārata* and the *Purāṇas*. Indian pilgrims drifted as far from India as Baku in search of cult-spots and trade.

The exclusive study of fetishes, superstitions, ritual would lead us far astray, but we can show the survival of primitive implements as well. The saddle-quern is found all over the world in prehistoric excavations, but also used in Indian kitchens today (Fig. 4) even when the cooking is done on an electric or kerosene stove. It is no longer used to grind corn



Fig. 4. Modern Indian saddle-quern.

into meal or flour, for the rotary quern or mechanised flour-mill has displaced it for that purpose. The form has also changed from the old pointed narrow saddle-quern (Fig. 5) which sloped upwards from the user, who must have knelt with the pointed end gripped between her knees. The slope allowed greater and more uniform pressure on the thrust. The current flat saddle-quern reduces no harder substance than sea-salt, which comes in large crystals that have to be ground down for the table or cooking pot. The general use of the flat quern is to pulp soft leaf-vegetables, coconut meat, condiments and spices, added to Indian curries ; even here, the Āndhra region uses a more efficient utensil, resembling a mortar and pestle. The "pestle," which fills almost the whole of the mortar, is not used for pounding but rolled with a conical grinding motion in the matrix, without lifting except at the end to take out the pulp. On the saddle-quern, the upper-class women of western India use the top grip, the lower the end grip, which is harder because the stone has to be rolled a quarter turn while being shoved back and forth. The class difference seems really to be of geographical origin, the top-grip being northern, the end grip southern. This may lend force to the literary tradition that the local brahmins came from the north, but should also indicate that the south continued to use the saddle-quern for hard grinding much later than the northerners because the mealie-stone is easier to use with the end grip. With the implement (which developed with the first agriculture before the end of the stone age) is performed a ceremony in force even among brahmins, yet without sanction in any of the brahmin scriptures which prescribe rites from birth to death. Before or on the name-day of a child (twelfth after birth), the top roller stone is dressed up, passed around the cradle containing the child and finally deposited at the foot of the infant, in the cradle. The theory given is that of sympathetic magic, namely that the child would grow up as strong and unblemished as the stone, to be as long-lived and free from infirmity. The dress is accordingly the cape (*kuñci*) of



Fig. 5.
Indus Valley
saddle-quern.

a little baby ; but there is the additional decoration with red and yellow pigment, plus a necklace, none of which are used on the child. The symbolism is multiple, as in so many other primitive observances, and the stone simultaneously represents the mother goddess, the good fairy who blesses the child. The ceremony is attended ENTIRELY BY WOMEN, presided over by the oldest woman present who is not a widow, and should have borne children herself. The implication is that a stone age ceremony has come down with the implement, and has been borrowed by the brahmin families from the surrounding population. Whether such querns were used for extraction of the vedic *soma* drink, which might have been merely pressed between two flat stones, remains a conjecture.

The potters' technique shows similar ancient survivals. In Poona, the large wheel is used for mass-production of all pots. However, the largest pottery is rough-turned by women on the slow potter's disc, which is NEVER USED BY THE MEN. The rough pots are compacted and shaped by the male potters, using a baked earthen backer on the inside, with a wooden paddle for the outside. They turn the pot skilfully as it is held, or walk round it if it is too large. The zigzag pattern around the neck of the largest jars is primitive, in other countries understood as the equivalent of a necklace for the mother-goddess. Remarkably enough, the larger wheel-turned pottery of Poona is also finished in the same way, being turned small and thick-walled, paddled but expanded (as disc pottery is not) by hand to a compact, thin-walled vessel of about four times the original capacity, only the lip remaining untouched. The technical reason is the poor quality of the potter's clay about Poona, even though specially imported from a few miles distance or taken from the local river-confluence deposits. The use of the potter's disc exclusively by women cannot be a reversion in technique, but a genuine survival. In U.P. the wheel turns out beautiful, strong, thin-walled pots from earth which contains a greater amount of silicates. Those northern pots are baked in permanent kilns as against the simple open pit-kilns of Poona where control of firing is solely by initial regulation of the chaff and straw layers of fuel. The disc has been found in pre-historic excavations, of the identical pattern as that used today, whence

one may conclude that the Poona potters retain traces of a primitive technique just beyond the stage when the women were the first makers of pots, by hand. There are no special primitive observances left. The potters worship Māruti, Viṭhobā, Rakhumāī, and other local gods, either directly officiating themselves, or by hiring members of higher (the Marāṭhā *gurav*, or even a brahmin) caste to do so. Therefore it is remarkable that in many village areas all over the country, men of the potter caste assist or officiate at important ceremonies, marriages and funeral rites, particularly the burials. This is considered necessary by the peasant castes even when the brahmin priest is not invited. The potter families have drifted into Poona because of decayed village economy in the rural areas, where earthen pots have mostly been replaced by tins or cheap metal vessels that last much longer ; the potters' settlement (*kumbhār ves*) is just across the road from the *dargāh* of Sheikh Salla, on top of an old ruin-mound ; ancient window-or door-arches are still visible beneath the potter's wheel. Economic pressure has killed off the most paying branches of the potter's craft. The manufacture of tiles is now replaced by machine-pressed Mangalore tiles brought in by rail. Brick-making has become a business run by anyone having capital, with a few hired labourers, though it was also a potters' subcaste monopoly two generations ago.

These examples show that acculturation in India was a continuous process extending over the millennia, very difficult to date for that very reason. It was not at base a violent action, since both the more advanced and the less advanced elements in the formation of a new society borrowed from each other. Not all the details can be given their proper historical setting, but to ignore them altogether or to dismiss them as unworthy of the serious historian's notice cuts off at once the source and material for history as visualized here.

Notes & References :

1. Data on tribes will be found in the works of Enthoven and others ; cf. chap. I, note 11.

2. The Ḍāṅgs take to woodcutting, Kāthkaris burn charcoal, and thresh rice for the chaff as payment ; the Assam tea estates recruit most of their labour from tribesmen, not only from the surrounding hills, but from as far away as Choṭā Nāgpūr. None of them like

steady labour. Those who took to it became agricultural or professional castes many generations ago; but such possibilities become rarer every year. The tribesman has now to join the agricultural proletariat as an individual.

3. Dendrochronography is the measurement of sequences in tree-rings, from wood in different monuments. White ants and the climate make this difficult in India. Carbon 14 technique is useful, though less accurate, and made rather difficult by air contaminated because of atomic explosions for 'experimental' purposes.

4. Henri Frankfort: *Studies in the early pottery of the near East* [R. Anthr. Inst., London, occasional papers 6 (1925), 8 (1927)] established the still accepted pottery index for Mesopotamia. R.E.M. Wheeler made it possible by excavations at Arikameḍu in 1945 to extend the method to India, by noting Arretine (Italic) pottery in Indian strata. For Mesopotamian archaeology, cf. Seton Lloyd: *Foundations in the dust* (Pelican Books A 336). Excavations at Jarmo and Melefaat collated with the most archaic Hassuna pottery establish the sequence from a pre-pottery stage to the literate urban cultures of Mesopotamia.

5. A good survey is to be seen in the Indian Government publication: *Archaeology in India* (1950) and *AI* 9. Special articles in *Ancient India* (of which the first 11 numbers were available at the time of writing) are also valuable, as being written from the modern point of view. F. R. Allchin's note (Trans. All-India Oriental Conference, 1955) *Neolithic culture in India: a resurvey of evidence* summarizes most of the available information. My gratitude is expressed here for stimulating discussions with Dr. and Mrs. Allchin, who also verified my finds of stone-age tools and corrected the old-fashioned terminology.

6. Cf. Khwājā Muhammad Ahmad, *Preliminary excavations at prehistoric sites near Janampet*; an undated, perfunctory report. A great deal of unsystematic work conducted under the auspices of various colleges and universities is as deplorable. Any reader who rushes to do his own digging should first study L. Woolley's *Digging up the past* (Pelican A 4) and Wheeler's *Archaeology from the earth* (Pelican A 356), which has special value for Indian excavations. The only caution to add is that current Indian technique (e.g. pottery) must also be studied.

7. Best described in H. de Terra & T. T. Paterson: *Studies in the ice age in India and associated human cultures*, which surveys the oldest sites.

8. The one I know best was on a farm owned in 1931 by one McIsaacs, on the road from Bangalore to Māgaḍi.

9. My informant, Dr. C. V. Naṭarājan, pointed out the actual boulder, but I have not explored the cave, nor found it described anywhere.

10. This alone would suffice to dispose of Freud's theory of *Totem and Tabu*, which seems quite arbitrary from the ethnographer's point of view. It was shown by B. Malinowski in his *Dynamics of cultural change* that the Oedipus complex and corresponding "incest motives"

are replaced by others in a matrilineal or matrilocal society, as for example when the maternal uncle occupies the position of authority in the house and over the children which our society grants to the father.

11. The women in densely populated Bardez (Goa) still hoe their small plots, which it will not pay to bring under a hired plough; the menfolk have mostly left to earn money abroad, for sending home, and hoe culture is thus not a continued practice, but reversion. On the other hand the hills of adjacent parts of Goa still show slash-and-burn agriculture, the soil being fertilized by the jungle burnt for clearing and turned by the hoe while the crop sown is *nācṇi* (*Eleusine coracana*). This type of clearing and plantation, abandoned within a year or two because of decreasing soil fertility, is called *kumbher*, and practised mainly by the autochthonous *gāvaḍās* who also supply agricultural labour and know how to plough and cultivate by later methods.

12. The custom of bride-price seems to prevail among about 85% of the Mahārāṣṭrian population, as does in effect the practice of divorce for non-support, and widow-remarriage. The upper classes, headed by brahmins, frowned upon the last two practices, and gave a dowry to the bridegroom instead. Modern legislation is supposed to have brought both dowry and bride-price into a certain disrepute.

13. The custom of human sacrifice may be traced through the centuries in outlying areas like Bastār state, down to the present century. Sporadic ritual murder is reported almost every year. The Thugs grafted robbery for profit onto such ritual killing of human beings, which led to the menacing increase and quick suppression of Thuggee. Sir. J. Woodroffe reports in *Shakti and Shākta* (Madras & London, 1920, p. 61): "Take for instance the rite of human sacrifice which the (tantric) *Kālikalpalatā* says that the Raja alone may perform (*rājā nara-baliṃ dadyān nānyo'pi parameśvari*), but in which, as the *Tantrasāra* states, no Brāhmaṇa may participate (*brāhmaṇānāṃ nara-bali-dāne nādhikāraḥ*)". For all that, the *Sahyādri-khaṇḍa* of the *Skanda-purāṇa* (ed. J. Gerson da Cunha, Bombay 1877, p. 306) reports that Karhāḍā brahmins south of the Koynā confluence were in the habit of sacrificing brahmins to a mother-goddess, a suspicion which continued to attach to them even in the last century (Wilson: *Indian Castes*, II. 22; W. Crooke: *The popular religion and folk-lore of Northern India*, London 1896, II. 169-179). These survivals only prove the great influence of the brahmin priesthood towards more humane observances, as well as the peculiar symbiosis that caused occasional reversion among the highest. The essential is that as long as means of production continued to be primitive any great fundamental change in the ideological superstructure was difficult. The ideological exchange was therefore invaluable as part of the mechanism of social assimilation.

CHAPTER III

CIVILIZATION AND BARBARISM IN THE INDUS VALLEY

3.1. The Indus cities.
3.2. Indus trade and religion.
3.3. Maintenance of a class structure.
3.4. Food production.

CRITICIZING the view of H. R. Hall that the Sumerians might have developed their culture on the Indus, A. Berriedale Keith commented: "If the Sumerians were originally Dravidians, and attained a high civilization in the Indus valley, it is remarkable that no trace of this high civilization is found in India, which, as far as we know, first attained the art of writing from Semites not before 800 B. C., and which commenced building in stone and town-dwelling long after the age of the Ṛg-veda."[1] With neat irony, the archaeological discovery in the Indus valley of very imposing urban ruins — in brick, not stone — resembling the Sumerian was announced at just the time that the heedless text-critic wrote his lines.

3.1. The main discovery was of two cities[2] remarkably similar (as far as could be seen through the devastation caused by brick-robbers and badly planned archaeology) in ground plan, layout, extent and architecture though nearly four hundred miles apart as the crow flies. The northern city of Harappā in the Montgomery district of the Punjab was once washed by the stream of the Rāvī, the southern, Mohenjo-dāro, seven miles from Ḍokri in the Larkana district of Sind was formerly on the

bank of the Indus, which has also changed its course, due probably to the continued rise of the Himālayas, with slight consequent tilting of the plain.[3] The impressive ruins show that the original cities must have covered an area about one mile square in each case, though not all the now remaining mounds that survive erosion by wind, water, human hands have been excavated. A hundred years ago Harappā still showed a walled portion about half a mile square, though the wall must have been of medieval construction. Traces of Mohenjo-dāro walls as well as of embankments for retraining the river have also been discovered, in this case presumably original. Each city was densely settled, uninterrupted by anything like a modern 'lung' or park, but settled according to a careful plan, with main streets laid out neatly at right angles, and multifarious straight lanes leading off them. The houses excavated (at Mohenjo-dāro, Harappā being too devastated) were often large in size, clustered together in blocks. What Mackay called the Palace at Mohenjo-dāro (block 1 in the *Dk* area) is merely a merchant's house about 180′ x 70′, only a little larger than the other merchants' houses that surround it. The northern wall of the house, built solidly throughout of burnt brick, is in part as much as seven feet thick. Such massive walls are characteristic of the masonry in general. They indicate — when the stairways are taken into consideration — the existence of one or more upper storeys. The floors (or flat roofs) were supported on heavy beams of Himālayan timber brought from a long distance. Every one of the larger houses had a well-paved courtyard, its own well, bathroom, privy. Besides these, one feature further distinguished the cities from the Mesopotamian : a beautiful drainage system for carrying off rainwater, bathwater, and sewage from the houses to cesspits which must have been regularly cleared. The ground level rose from 30 to 50 feet during the periods of occupation, which means not less than 500 and perhaps as much as 1500 years, because mud-brick (which would have washed off more earth into the deposit) was not used in general. House plans changed too, but the same wells continued in use ; their built-up curbs now tower high in the excavated courtyards. The street boundaries were not infringed in all these centuries, which is another

remarkable contrast with Mesopotamia, Greece, or Rome. Not all the houses were as sumptuous as the greater ones described, while at the other end of the scale came whole block-sections of uniform two-room tenements, with walls too thin to support more than one storey, total size of each dwelling 12 x 20 feet. These were called 'coolie lines' by the excavators, whose ingenuity had found modern names for the streets, but rarely any explanation beyond the mental reach of an Imperial Briton. They tell us that the twin cities formed part of a kingdom or empire, with a bureaucracy, a priesthood, a bourgeoisie, bazaars, and so on. The sole evidence is that each city was dominated by a detached 'citadel' complex, probably of buildings for ritual purposes that were fortified at a *later* stage, which looked down from a height of perhaps 50 feet (on artificial mud- and burnt-brick platforms) upon the rest of the city which extended to the east. Virgin soil was reached only in a part of Harappā. This yields the information that the cities sprang up almost in their final type. All essential features of the urban cultures remained unchanged almost all through their existence, except for gradual inner decay hastened by the sudden, violent incursions which one deduces from skeletons of massacred inhabitants in some of the houses and streets.

These cities afford a good test of the methods proposed in this book. The archaeological record, by no means complete nor satisfactory, is about all that remains. Certain finds in the cities remind us of later 'Hindu' iconography or customs, but it is obvious that the continuity was violently interrupted. Keith's remark, that town-dwelling proper in India was post-Ṛg-vedic, is essentially correct. We must, therefore, reason out the proper conclusions from contemporary parallels in Mesopotamia, from the productive tools disclosed, and their results as preserved in the ruins. Writing existed at the time. The cities are demonstrably older than the Sargonid age of Mesopotamia. Gold, silver, jewellery have been found buried under floors (in one case at least, stolen by an inhabitant of the 'coolie lines'). The people knew the use of copper and bronze tools, though neat stone implements were also in use. There is evidence for the manufacture and dyeing of cotton cloth in

considerable quantity. The pottery is beautifully made on the wheel (not the disc), but utilitarian, standardized as to form, and mass-produced with rather mediocre decoration or none. The inhabitants knew the use of barley, wheat, rice, sesamum (an important source of food-oil in northern India to this day). Humped cattle, sheep, goats were apparently domesticated, the former being hitched to carts with solid wheels as is proved by clay and bronze models. Buffaloes and elephants are depicted too on seals though whether they were domesticated or not is another matter ; for, the same evidence would lead to the domestication of the tiger and rhinoceros ! The seals contain many chimaeric animals, compounded from elephant, bull, ram, tiger, fish, and so on, hence are not always logically safe to use for arguments about contemporary realities. The trade of the city is not to be doubted, from the beautifully adjusted standard weights which remain unchanged in all the archaeological history of the place. Some of the weights are so small that they could only have been utilized for careful weighing of precious commodities. The weight-scales show a basic system of counting* by fours and tens, just as the Babylonian proceeded by use of bases six and ten. The most notable feature of the static Indus culture was its inability to expand. There were no Indus settlements in the Gangetic valley or in the peninsula, which would have necessitated the clearing of jungles. Even in the Indus Valley proper, the greater part of the settlements were little hamlets, so that expansion was limited even along the Indus.

3.2. The need for a water-supply independent of the seasons necessarily confines early concentration of population to river valleys, particularly in a monsoon-dominated country like India where almost all precipitation is concentrated in the 18 weeks ending about the middle of October. Of the major

* This quadragesimal system persists to this day in subdivisions of a rupee, maund, seer ; as it does in a peculiar account notation to base four using alternate horizontal and vertical strokes ; and in the use of the four fingers as well as the joints and tip of each finger as a 4-base abacus with the thumb used only for counting, which survives in the *kata* system of secret bargaining in some Indian market-places.

river systems, that of the Brahmaputrā is mostly in high mountains outside the country. The Indus and the Ganges predominate in the north, the Narmadā and the Mahānadī water the base of the peninsula, the Kriṣṇā-Godāvarī complex cuts across the middle of the triangle. The Kāverī is the most respectable river further south. Yet it was the Indus alone that could develop a great urban civilization when the rest of the country supported a thin savage population that eked out a precarious livelihood by food-gathering. This was inevitable. The Nile and Mesopotamia showed great parallel developments, the Mississippi was unsettled till the last century, the Amazon remains undeveloped to this day. Clearly, the river by itself does not suffice. The common factor of the earliest riparian urban cultures is that the rivers concerned flow through a desert. The jungles on the Amazon cannot be cleared without modern heavy machinery, while the tremendous sod of the Mississippi prairies was first broken by heavy ploughs which were not sent to that region till the last century. There was no possibility that primitive man on either of the two rivers could emerge from irregular food-gathering to secure, large-scale food production. The desert was necessary because there were no heavy forests to clear. An alternative would have been a loess corridor, as on the Danube, which did show greater advance in pre-history without full urban culture. Neolithic man cannot clear great tropical forests with his stone tools, particularly in alluvial soil as in the Gangetic basin. The desert made real agriculture, yielding a substantial surplus, possible, as well as necessary. It promoted the search for materials such as timber and metals, with exchange of commodities along the great trade-route provided by the river itself. It gave excellent protection against savage beasts ; and against savage human beings, provided their military technique was not sufficiently advanced to cross dry wastes. This explains the early development on the Indus.

There is a substratum (of culture and technique) common to the Indus and Mesopotamian river-valley cultures,[†] manifested by metrology and some glyptic motifs. For example, the naked, bearded, lion-killing hero Gilgamesh, prototype of the Greek Heracles, has a representation in the Indus valley

also, in peculiarly indigenous technique; the hero's friend, the Bull-man Enkidu (or Ea-bani) is also found on an Indus seal in local portrayal. At the Jemdet-Nasr period, we find a composite Bull-Elephant (fig. 6 *a*) which can only have been copied locally by a Mesopotamian artist from an Indic motif (fig. 6, *b*, *c*). The combination persists in India through the



Fig. 6. *a*.



Fig. 6. *b*.



Fig. 6. *c*.

The bull-elephant in a Jemdet-Nasr (*a*) seal; and in the Indus art (*b*, *c*) a copper plate and stamp seal respectively.

ages, being known in historical times as the Tantric *gaja-vṛṣabha*, with mystical qualities. In fact, there is every reason to believe that a good deal of the Indus art and hieroglyphics are intimately connected with Tantric motifs[5] of Hinduism which first began to be openly recorded about the sixth century A.D., having been profoundly secret mysteries till that time Never to this day have they lost their secrecy entirely. The four-armed homo-sign of Indus seals is still recognizable in Hindu iconography. Nevertheless, an attempt to read Indic seal-legends with the aid of a Sumerian or Hittite syllabary has not succeeded,[6] nor has the similarity with Easter Island signs, or Maori signs led to any decipherment. The records found are brief legends on stamp-seals which, even if read, could give very little information. One suggestion for the paucity of records is that the Indus people used palm-leaf for their documents. There seems to be no long inscription of any sort,[7] and no bilingual seals. Only one record exists which might possibly be intermediate between the Indus writing and Asokan Brāhmī.[8] Thus the most valuable possibility of collating archaeology with the epigraphs has been lost.

No urban culture without a class division has been known till the 20th century socialist revolutions. It follows that we shall have to reason out the class structure (as well as the productive structure) of the Indus cities directly from the evidence, without the aid of historical writings. That there was a sharp class division at Harappā and Mohenjo-dāro is clear from the different types of dwellings excavated. In particular, there were large municipal or temple granaries with which were associated pounding floors. The wooden mortars whose remains are found show that grain was husked there. Flour was obviously ground in each house on the saddle querns found, but not in the huge granary. The big storage houses are accompanied by mean barrack-like quarters which could only have been the dwellings of slaves, to judge from parallel Mesopotamian excavations; temple-slaves would seem indicated for the Indus cities, as they are by the Mesopotamian tablets. Certainly, the pottery mass-produced to standard designs on the wheel could not have been made without an extensive class of potters, whose kilns have been found — on the outskirts of the city in the earlier period, right inside the city in the long period of decline. The tools and implements, some of stone but many excellent specimens of copper and bronze, show highly specialized techniques. Brick-making and construction work must have kept many busy, as also servicing the city in general. We have conclusive evidence for long-distance trade. Indian copper was taken by sea to the island of Bahrein (Ṭilmūn) for exchange with commodities brought by a special group of traders. The patronage in the earlier period was from the great temples like that of Nammu at Ur, from whose stock the stores were obtained, as well as the finance. We know a good deal [9] from the Babylonian end of insurance, risks, loans, division of profit, as well as the monopolist *alik Tilmūn* merchants of Bahrein. In the later period, the Assyrian king seems to have been the special patron, virtually senior partner, of the merchants' association for this trade. That they imported copper, ivory, monkeys, pearls ("fish-eyes") and such novelties, is attested by cuneiform records; all of these came in some quantity from India. Ivory combs listed in Babylonian documents have been found at Mohenjo-dāro.

(fig. 7), which was probably the Babylonian Meluḫḫa. The Indus merchants or their close representatives had small settlements in Mesopotamia indicated by characteristic cult (fig. 8) objects and seals. That they exported cotton cloth is highly

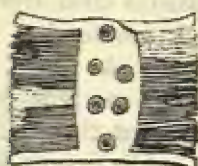


Fig. 7.



Fig. 8.

Fig. 7. Comb from Mohenjo-dāro; the identical type is still being made of ivory in India.

Fig. 8.: Fragment of a cultic steatite vase from Tell Agrab circa 2800-2600 B. C., with an Indus type humped bull, manger, and a fowl of some kind.

probable, possibly also fine goat-wool cloth; textiles were the most easily transported and most valuable exchange merchandise of the *alik Ṭilmūn*. What the Indians brought back is not certain, but silver was unquestionably one of the commodities. The metal is comparatively scarce in India, while pieces have been found at Mohenjo-dāro [10] of a weight standard that does not seem local. One of these, neatly broken off from a silver ingot (presumably for exchange before the days of regular coinage), has cuneiform marks punched on either side. As for the method of navigation, a late record survives of what must have been a far earlier tradition, of days long before the reported discovery of the monsoon and its rediscovery by Harpalus, which enabled direct and fast sailings once a year to and from the Red sea. The *Bāveru Jātaka* [11] tells us that Indian merchants sailed along the coast, using a compass crow who was released to find the direction of the nearest land in case the ship should have been driven out of sight of any landmark. This, incidentally, might explain the bird that

hovers without purpose or support above a ship (fig. 9) depicted on a Fara seal.[12] The matter of a port at the mouth of the Indus seems to have troubled our archaeologists, but the port would in all probability have been Mohenjo-dāro itself, as was Ur at the other end, for the much smaller ships of that period. The Indus representation of a boat steered or paddled by a human figure and with a structure of some sort in the middle is well known. A lager ship or galley on another seal (fig. 10) seems to have escaped recognition, perhaps because of a picture printed upside down. The correct position is indicated by the fact that the ideograms on a seal always come at the top, and the particular *alpha*-shaped character always opens to the right, as shown here.



Fig. 9. Detail of a Mesopotamian cylinder seal ; boat with compass-bird.



Fig. 10. Indus ship after Vats pl. XC. 233.

This foreign trade had necessarily its interior counterpart. The Indus cities fabricated metal tools and utensils from ores discovered at some distance. Ivory and monkeys would also have to be found some distance away. The trade cannot all have been along the great artery, the Indus. Some traces of the Indus culture have been found in Rājasthān, Kāṭhiāwār, and such adjacent regions, as far as Lothal in Ahmedābād district, (*IAR*. 1955, pp. 9-12) without elucidating the problem of trade to any considerable extent. Let it be suggested here that the trade (though not the Indus traders themselves) penetrated the neolithic Deccan. We know that gold was produced in the deep Peninsula at a time when the savage producers could have had little use for it. The polished stone tools as well as the larger blade tools of stone give the impression of being intrusive elements in the Deccan microlith industry. The former would be imitated from the bronze and copper tools of the Indus valley, in much the same way as the polished stone axes of

Central Europe which reach as far as Scandinavia are supposed to be of a secondary neolithic induced by the production of copper and bronze in the Near East. The larger blade-like stone tools of the Deccan would certainly have been copied directly from those of the Indus people. These ancient trade routes would be marked by trails made by porters carrying headloads in caravans, and almost certainly identifiable by means of cairns, pillars, or ledges for resting headloads, about four miles apart on the route.

3.3. The main question is, how was the class-structure maintained? Who fed all these people, what was the method which kept a wealthier class secure against reprisals by those who produced the wealth? Every known class-division rests, in the final analysis, upon the use of force whereby the surplus produced by one class of people is expropriated by a ruling minority. The need for violence may be reduced to a minimum if the class of producers can see no other way of making a living except under the direction of the upper class. Often, this means the use of religion in order to convince the working class that they must give up the surplus, lest supernatural forces destroy them by mysterious agencies. The harsher the exploitation, the greater the need for repressive force, for men will not always starve in quiet without protest. Here again, superstition helps by powerful tabus. The instruments of force, namely weapons, cannot be hidden in the archaeological record, while superstition reveals itself through images or special buildings for religious use.

The existence of the wealth is not in doubt. Even though the cities have been sacked in antiquity, and thereafter looted by treasure-hunters, brick-diggers, misguided archaeologists, treasure hoards containing gold, silver, jewellery have come to light. The great houses have massive thief-proof walls of burnt brick ; the house entrance is almost invariably in a narrow side-lane, with some sort of doorkeeper's lodge immediately within the entrance. With the wells in the courtyard, the houses were the owners' fortresses. But there is a remarkable absence of decoration, monuments, inscriptions, large statuary, even ornamental brickwork, tiles, painted plaster or other manifestations of the spirit of public display to be expected

from a conqueror's megalomania or new-rich trader's cheerful vulgarity. The treasures were a strictly private concern. Town planning did not go as far as a surface of brick or slag on the streets, which must have been impassable after what little rain there was. Finally, the tools of violence were curiously weak, though nothing is directly known of their social mechanism for wielding force, which we call the state. The weapons found in the Indus cities are flimsy, particularly the ribless leaf-blade copper spearheads which would have crumpled up at the first good thrust. There is nothing like a sword in the main Indus strata. Archers occur in the ideograms, arrowheads of stone and copper have been discovered. The bow would be a survival of the hunting age. Of course, iron was not known, so that a few weapons in the hands of a small minority might have sufficed ; but the contrast with the excellent, sturdy though archaic, tools proves that the use of weapons was not very important. Therefore, the state mechanism, whatever it was, must have had some powerful adjunct that reduced the need for violence to a minimum. The cities rested upon trade, not fighting; but if the army or police were not very strong, what helped the trader maintain his unequal sharing of profit?

The answer seems to lie in religion. Though there are no great statues of the gods, what has been called the 'citadel' mound undoubtedly corresponds to the temple-*zikkurat* structures in Mesopotamia. The whole construction was on a brick platform at least 30 feet high, safe from floods ; the nexus of buildings was walled, even used as a fortified area in later times. Nevertheless, the complicated, wide entrance stairs, useless for defence, are explicable only as of ceremonial purpose. The Harappan site has been devastated by brick-robbing, while at Mohenjo-dāro, what must have been the ruins of a major building in the sacred enclosure are covered by a Kuṣāṇa stūpa. But the adjacent 'Great Bath' at Mohenjo-dāro (filled with water drawn laboriously by hand from a special adjacent well, beautifully constructed with bitumen waterproofing between brick layers, a drain for emptying, and surrounded on three sides by cells) must have been a ritual tank, because of the beautiful and well-used bathrooms in every private house which distinguish the city from anything in proto-history, or Meso-

potamia, or Egypt. Even a bather from the citadel could easily have descended the steps in the wall which led down to the river. I have explained this as the prototype of the sacred lotus pond [*puṣkara;* of. *JBBRAS.* 27. (1951). 23-30] which survived in later times. Indian kings of whom we know anything were not 'anointed' as in Europe but 'sprinkled' at such holy spots. I further suggested that the spot was dedicated to mother-goddess worship; part of the fertility ritual was to consort with her living hierodules at the *puṣkara*, which corresponds to sacred prostitution in the temples of Ishtar in Mesopotamia. Doll-like images of bird-headed females, evidently dancers or similar persons of sacred office wearing a special mask head-dress, are found in profusion in the ruins, and in those of parallel cultures of much less developed type, as at Kulli. The living representatives of a long-preserved cult would help explain the absence of cult statuary. The evidence is a bit mixed because the stamp seals contain nothing but cult-figures of male animals; the few human figures on the seals, when identifiable, seem also to be male. Among the latter is a bearded three-faced deity which has some of the attributes of the later Hindu god Śiva. For that matter, iconotropic seals from the Indus may explain many legends of later Hinduism, as say that of Triśaṅku.[13] The *pipal* (Ficus religiosa) tree worshipped in India today is shown on the seals with its unmistakable leaves (fig. 11), hence was a cult-object five thousand years ago. However, we have to explain the duality of mother-goddess figures and male totemic cult animals in no way associated with each other. The seals had a special purpose besides that of cult worship, namely to impose a protective tabu upon merchandise.[14] If the trader developed his own property, independently of the temple goddess and temple property, it would explain why he found a different type of figure for protection.



Fig. 11. "The Sacrifice"; an Indus stamp-seal.

Dominance of religion would explain the changelessness of the culture over at least five hundred and more probably three times that number of years. From the earliest Harappan settlement on the site of a pre-Indus hamlet, to the period of violent destruction, we may note decay, but no essential change. This is also a feature peculiar to Indus cities, in contrast to Mesopotamian or Egyptian. The pottery forms and technique remain static till the last period of conquest by foreign raiders; the bronze tools also retain the older forms unchanged, as for example bar celts (fig. 12) for axes and adzes, without a shaft-hole. The latter would have been far more efficient, and was known to contemporary Sumerians, but occurs only in the top layers after foreign occupation (fig. 13). In later India, not only every part of the country, but every century developed its own characteristic script, whereas the Indus script shows no variation from the earliest to the latest discovered strata. The Egyptian hieroglyphics retained their forms for many centuries, but a hieratic and a demotic cursive writing developed. In Mesopotamia, the cuneiform syllabary replaced the hieroglyphic at an early age, giving us innumerable tablets of merchants, the law code of Hammurabi, inscriptions that dedicate statues, record transfer of land, sale of slaves, temple songs, epic poetry. Here we



Fig. 12.



Fig. 13.

Fig. 12. Bronze tool from lower levels at Mohenjo-dāro; same scale as Fig. 13.

Fig. 13. Bronze shaft-hole axe-adze; evidence of foreign occupation, upper strata, Mohenjo-dāro.

have absolutely nothing but short lines on seals, or brief scratches on pots. It might be that the merchants wrote on perishable material, such as starched cloth, leather, palm-leaf, or birch bark, but nothing has survived (except black lumps of what might be ink) to prove it; yet there was no reason why they should not have learned from their Sumerian counterparts how to write imperishably on clay. The conclusion is that long-term records were not thought necessary by them. The monopoly was absolutely secure, its continuation ensured by static tradition.

Such conservation based upon class monopoly of profits and upon religion would explain the changelessness of the script, as also that of the ground plan of a city dominated by its temple. The picture here is of a fixed class of traders under the tutelage of a mother-goddess temple, to which they paid tribute that did not interfere with their amassing considerable wealth on their own. The point is that the bulk of the working class population must also have found religious causes sufficient to keep them in their allotted position. No matter what the similarities in the grip of temple cults, cities like Ur of the Chaldees show decidedly greater military equipment as well as relics of kings who used it without relying exclusively upon the gods. The Indus valley does not.

3.4. We now come to the basic question, how did the cultivators produce the surplus grain which was necessary to feed the city people, whether temple-slave, workman, craftsman, trader or priest ? Assuming that they were able to induce people by trade and religion to part with the surplus of cereals, how were the cereals grown? Let us first note that the soil of the Indus valley is alluvial, as fertile as any other in the world. One rather unlikely conjecture is that there was a decidedly heavier monsoon rainfall in the Indus basin at that time, which allowed more cultivation. Extensive deforestation along the hills would account for far more destructive floods with a somewhat lower rainfall and greater aridity today. However, the evidence we are offered in support of the greater precipitation is feeble in the extreme. First, the burnt-brick construction in place of Mesopotamian sun-dried brick is supposed to

imply a much greater supply of firewood than the neighbouring scrub can give now; the same authors note however that the wood used for ceiling beams must have been imported by river from the Himālayan foot-hills while no brick-kilns nor the great slag-heaps that inevitably result from such extensive kiln-burning[15] have been found as yet about the Indus cities. There is no reason why the bricks could not have been burnt at a distance, nearer the firewood, to be brought down the river, as the firewood could have been. Alexander's fleet was built of Himālayan timber floated down the Beas river (Strabo 15.1.29). The second line of argument runs thus: the seals depict animals like rhinoceros, tigers, water-buffaloes, deer and so on, found in well-watered forest regions; therefore the region of the seals must have been a well-watered forest. This seems to lack some cogency when one considers that many of the seals display hybrid animals (chimaeras) part bull and part elephant, part goat part fish; sometimes a composite of three or four animals; once half tiger and half man which could have given rise to the later *Narasiṃha* (man-lion) incarnation of Viṣṇu. To be consistent, one would have to assume that the region abounded in such fantastic monsters. From our point of view, the animals on the seals are explained as the original totems at a pre-agricultural level — which could and must have been in hunting territory, while the compound animals symbolize joint clans with a hybrid totem, or combined tribal cult.

Let us first note that the surplus, in spite of the fertile soil, was relatively much less than in Mesopotamia or even the narrow valley of the Nile. The evidence is that we have just the two great cities, with trifling settlements elsewhere in the region which extends about nine hundred miles by nearly half that much. The next greatest settlement, Chānhu-dāro, covered less than 25 acres. A couple of promising mounds do not mark the sites of large cities, for the breadth at the base of such a 'tell' indicates the spread of refuse and debris by the action of rain through the millennia. In a decidedly smaller Mesopotamian region, we have numerous city-states trading and warring with each other. Even in the earliest antiquity

there were seven major cities in Mesopotamia, whose guardian figures have given rise to the legend of the seven sages (H. Zimmern: *Zeit. Assyriologie* 1923-4, pp. 151-154). These seven might be reflected on two Indus seals as well as in the later traditional seven *gotras* of brahmin theory that cannot be made to tally with the number of *gotras* recorded at any time. Why did the Indus valley not have a greater urban population density? The only possible answer is that the method of agriculture could not produce a relative surplus comparable to the Mesopotamian.

The difficulty is again that we have no contemporary information as to the actual method of agriculture used. Nevertheless, I venture to make the statement that the Indus people did not have the plough (which is depicted on Mesopotamian seals; cf. fig. 14), but only a toothed harrow which may



Fig. 14.

Fig. 14. Sumerian plough with seed-drill and short yoke-bar (from seals).

be recognised as one of the Indus script ideograms. Their agriculture could not have depended upon a much greater rainfall (which would have meant dense forest), but in considerable part upon irrigation. However, this irrigation could not have been the regular canal irrigation of Mesopotamia, or of later India and the modern Punjab. Without such irrigation, the Punjab, though with a heavier rainfall than that of Sind, would still support only a fraction of its population today. Besides use of the fertile silt deposits left on river-banks by natural floods, the Indus method of irrigation seems to have been damming of the rivers on the smaller branches. To this day, the silt deposits due to natural inundation make flood-irri-

gated* (*sailāba*, a special nomenclature) lands among the most fertile in Sind and the Punjab. Indus settlements on such land would be relatively impermanent, because of irregular floods and shifting rivers. The barrier dams would help flood the land on the banks.. In both cases, the fertilising silt thus deposited would be stirred with the harrow. This could produce a regular crop, but of limited amount compared to that where the deeper plough is used with water supplied by canals. Before the beginning of canals in Mesopotamia, which seem to have been in use well before the Sargonid age, the Sumerians also relied upon flood-deposited silt for their crops. The Egyptians with their negligible rains retained the natural method supplemented by deep canals. The Nile flood regularly supplied far more fertile mud deposits than the dams of the Indus. This would account fundamentally for the unchanging face and slow decay of the twin cities. The archaic method of agriculture would have been the only one feasible at the beginning of the third millennium B.C. Any real innovation that led to a decidedly greater surplus would have meant a corresponding revolution in the population and architecture of the cities themselves. The real plough (fig. 15) that could break up any soil came in use only during the iron age. The harrow (fig. 16) is employed to this day by Indian peasants for cultivation of softer

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* "Besides the canal-water area, a considerable extent of country, especially in the Shikarpur district (of Sind), is rendered capable of cultivation by natural flooding. These floods are quite beyond control and often do more harm than good, but when they are tolerably certain, as is the case with the Manchar lake in the Kurrachee district, they are very favourable to the growth of rabi or spring crops, especially wheat, on the land which has been temporarily submerged. Thus, in making the [revenue] Settlement, water-supply has to be classed under one of three heads, viz. flow (*moki*), lift (*charkhi*) or flood (*sailābi*), and then further classified according to the sufficiency and constancy of the flow, the expense incurred in bringing the water by lift to the field, and the certainty and duration of the flooding." (*B-P.* 3.338, quoting a report of 1875). Of the southern districts of the Punjab, including Montgomery district, which contains Harappā, the same author reports that the rainfall "is very scarce, so that here all cultivation depends on the rivers — on their overflow, on inundation-canals, and on the use that can be made of wells in the moister soils or near the canals. Crops raised by rainfall are hardly known except at rare intervals. . . ." (*B-P.* 2.537).

earth even when not broken up by previous use of the plough. Such working is used for light, shallow soils. The deep, soft mud of the *khāzan* on the west-coast is similarly harrowed during the monsoon, though the same land, when completely dry, has to be ploughed heavily for the second crop.

The oldest known description of the Indus climate and agriculture on flood-irrigated lands comes from Alexander's

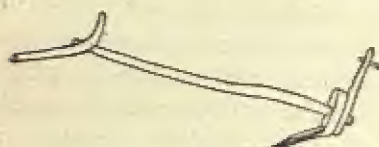


Fig. 15 Modern Indian plough; wood, with iron tip for share; rope binding not shown.

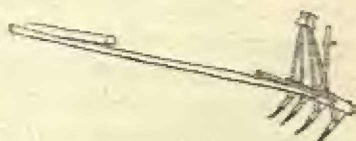


Fig. 16. Modern Indian harrow with detachable seed-drill; iron tips on the teeth are quite rare.

captains. It is all the more valuable because Strabo (15.1.17-18) was puzzled by the apparent discrepancy between conditions in the upper Punjab and down the Indus:

"(Aristoboulos said) they spent ten months on the voyage (down the Indus) without ever seeing rain, even when the Etesian winds were at their height. The rivers, however, were full, and inundated the plains. The sea was found unnavigable from the prevalence of contrary winds, but no land breezes succeeded. Nêarchos writes to the same effect, but does not agree with Aristoboulos regarding the summer rains, for he says that the plains are watered with rain in summer, but are without rain in winter. Both writers speak about the rising of the rivers. Nêarchos says that when they encamped near the Achesines (Chenāb) they were obliged to shift their quarters to higher ground when the river rose above its former level, and this was forty cubits, of which twenty filled the channel up to the brim, and the other twenty inundated the plains. They concur also in stating that the cities built upon mounds become as islands, as in Egypt and Ethiopia, and that the inundation ceases after the setting of Arcturus when the waters subside. They add that the land, while still but half dried, is sown, and though scratched into furrows by any common labourer, it nevertheless brings what is planted to perfection and makes the fruits of good quality."

'Scratched into furrows by any common labourer' can only mean that the land was not tilled with the plough, nor dug up, but harrowed crudely. The Greeks used a solar calen-

dar to describe phenomena which the Indians still date by a lunar calendar. 'Cities' here means walled parent villages on Tells, generally surrounded by shifting colonies of seasonal hut-clusters which the Greek called villages. The Indus dams are not mentioned, as they had presumably been destroyed by the Aryans — who were then actually settled under that name (*Arioi*, *Arianoi* ; Strabo 15.2.1, 15.2.9) over an extensive region on the west bank of the Indus, through parts of Afghanistan and east Persia — to which last country they gave its name Iran (Ariana).

Our reasoning as to the harrow and flood-irrigation is therefore simple enough. The sign of the harrow or rake has become a hieroglyph in the Indus script, while there is nothing which can be interpreted* as a plough. Bullock carts are found among the toy models, where there is neither plough harness nor a plough proper. The method of irrigation we do know about, if only from the enemies who destroyed the Indus culture. These were the Aryans, whose documents survive as the earliest Sanskrit texts, notably the Ṛgveda. There, we read of the chief Aryan war-god Indra, a model of the marauding bronze-age chieftain, as busy ceaselessly looting the stored treasures of the godless : *nidhīn adevān amṛṇad ayāsyaḥ* (*RV.* 10.138.4). This presumably refers to the Indus valley settlers, for whom two major terms are used : The *Dasyus* or *Dāsas* later to mean 'conquered people,' and *paṇi*, which means 'trader,' as do its descendants, *vaṇik*, and the modern *Banniyāh* ; *paṇa* means coin in classical Sanskrit, *paṇya* is "commodity." Presumably, these are two major classes of the Indus valley people. What concerns us here is the disruption of

* Note, however, that S. Langdon (in Marshall 2.437, sign 68) finds an Indus sign which is the Sumerian sign for 'plough' though there is nothing in the ideogram which any of us could so interpret from Indian experience. A terra-cotta object now in the Prince of Wales Museum at Bombay (apparently Mackay plate CVIII. 3) from the lower levels at Mohenjo-dāro has been interpreted variously as a model of a chair, or a plough-share. The latter use seems highly unlikely, as there is no way a rigid yoke-pole could have been attached, nor a plough-handle. Any share modelled after this object would break off, if of wood ; there was no iron then available, while bronze would have been too costly.

agriculture. In Mesopotamia, many successive invaders were either repulsed or took their place at the top ; the productive stratum at the base continued its work through the centuries. After the Aryans, the Indus cities, as well as urban life itself, vanished completely. At Harappā, the top layer of occupation is distinctly foreign, as is the associated cemetery *H*, first tentatively identified by V. G. Childe as Aryan. The city is mentioned by name as *Hariyūpīyā,* (*RV*. 6.27.5) ' city of the golden sacrificial pillars,' an obvious Sanskritization of a pre-Aryan name and another long survival in the poorly explored Indian onomasticon. We are further told that Indra there shattered the remnants of the *Varaśikhas* like an earthen pot, crumpling up their front line of a hundred and thirty panoplied warriors of the *Vṛcīvats* whereat the rest fled, giving the victory to king Abhyāvartin Cāyamāna. It is not clear whether this fight on the Yavyāvatī (= Rāvī) river was between Aryans and pre-Aryans or two Aryan tribes. The former is more likely, as nothing is heard thereafter of the Vṛcīvats, whereas Abhyāvartin Cāyamāna's people did survive in that region. Certainly, the written tradition and the archaeological record match very well here. Hence there is every justification for trying to discover how pre-Aryan agriculture and trade were ruined in the locality so that the cities remained hardly a memory. It is not clear that the Aryans reached Mohenjo-dāro as they reached Harappā, but there is the possibility that the city Nārmiṇī (*RV*. 1.149.3), mentioned as lighted up by the fire-god Agni was burnt down (as Ludwig would have it in his translation and analysis of the *RV*.), hence might be Mohenjo-dāro. Cities as such are not a Ṛgvedic phenomenon at all, and only these two are named. When, centuries later, new cities grew up, they were unplanned growths from villages, without drainage or regular layout, and in completely new localities.

The main feature of cemetery *H* at Harappā (no cemetery has been discovered at Mohenjo-dāro) is that remains of the adult dead are given urn-burial after the flesh had been removed from the bones (along with many of the bones) by birds and beasts of prey, or (less likely) by fire. Small children seem to have been buried entire, crouched into the pot as in the womb ; their skeletons are therefore recovered complete from

the jars, as against only a few bones each for their grown-up elders. Urn-burial is return to the womb, like crouched burial in cists, or burial in Mastabas, or in long barrows. The grave pottery is made by the same technique, of about the same forms as in graves at a lower level, say cemetery *R*-37 at Harappā, but there are two important differences between these two cemeteries of the same locality. In *R*-37, the dead were laid in a sleeping posture, without being decarnated ; at least one was buried in a shroud or coffin. Moreover, the pots of *H* burials have a remarkable freedom of decoration in totally new, imaginative designs with birds and animals, that were missing from the comparatively plain pottery of *R*-37. There is thus a radical change in burials which cannot be accounted for by internal revolution. The evidence for invasion by a ruder, fighting, barbarous people is greater. Shaft-hole axes and adzes are found for the first time in the upper layers ; the model of a horse (or ass) occurs only in the upper strata at Mohenjo-dāro. The presumption is that the decaying (brick kilns had begun to move into former residential quarters at Mohenjo-dāro) conservatism of the twin cities was broken by fighting invaders against whom, or by whom the citadel mound of Harappā was clearly fortified in its late phase. There is nothing to prove that exactly the same invaders penetrated or occupied Mohenjo-dāro or Chānhu-dāro, though corpses of the inhabitants lying in the streets or rooms or stairs of the former city, and evidence of barbarous foreigners occupying part of the latter town at its end-phase prove at least similar invasion or raiding in each case. It is clear from the excavations that these newcomers brought no writing of their own, added no substantial construction to the city (unless it has disappeared entirely from brick-robbing at Harappā), and that the cities vanished soon after their arrival, in spite of a millennial past. This would be inexplicable unless the basis of food-production had also been ruined at the same time. The invaders did not or could not continue the older type of agriculture, whatever it was, nor had they any better method of their own. Here the Indus valley differs from Mesopotamia, which sprouted new cities without ruining the old, supported invader after invader, some of whom (like the dynasty of Hammurabi) left a pro-

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found mark both upon the older Mesopotamian cities and upon the history of world civilization. The end of those cities (like Ur) can be correlated with considerable certainty with the neglect of the system of irrigation canals, say in the later Assyrian and Persian periods.

Vedic Indra is described again and again as freeing the streams. This was taken as a nature-myth in the days of Max Müller, a poetic representation of the rain-god letting pent-up waters loose from imprisoning clouds. Recorded but ignored details of the feat make such an explanation quite impossible. Indra freed the rivers from the grip of a demon *Vṛtra*. The word has been analysed by two most competent philologists[16] [with full knowledge of Iranian (Aryan) as well as Sanskrit records] who did not trouble to theorise about the means of production. Their conclusion from purely philological considerations was that *vṛtra* meant "obstacle," "barrage," or "bloquage," not a demon. The actual Ṛgvedic description independently bears this out in full. The demon lay like a dark snake across the slopes. The rivers were brought to a standstill (*tastabhānāḥ*); when the "demon" was struck by Indra's shattering weapon (*vajra*), the ground buckled, the stones rolled away like chariot wheels, the pent-up waters flowed over the demon's recumbent body (cf. *RV*. 4.19.4-8; 2.15.3). This is a good description of dams (not embankments as Piggott would have it) being broken up, while such prehistoric dams, now called *Gebr-band*, are still to be found on many watercourses in the western parts of the region under consideration. The evidence for Indra's breaking up dams is not merely rationalization of the Vṛtra myth. *RV*. 2.15.8 : *riṇag rodhāṃsi kṛtrimāṇi* = "he removed artificial barriers" makes this clear; *rodhas* means "dam" elsewhere in the *RV*, as in later Sanskrit. Indra is praised for restoring to its natural course the river *Vibālī*, which had flooded land along its banks. That is, the pre-Aryan method of agriculture depended upon natural floods and flooding the lands on the banks of smaller rivers by means of seasonal (*RV*. 5.32.2) dams (without regular masonry), to obtain the fertilising deposit of silt to be stirred by the harrow. The Aryans shattered this dam system, thereby ruining the agriculture of the region and the possibility of continuing city

life for long, or of maintaining the urban population. The fact of the ruin is undeniable ; the causes have to be deduced from whatever data is available, which includes numerous heavy flood silt deposits that are visible in Mohenjo-dāro excavations. The very floods which endangered city and hamlet had made possible the agriculture which supported the inhabitants.

These bits of reasoning lead to a conclusion which might be summarized as follows. If the Indus people failed to adopt shaft-hole axes, ribbed spears, swords, canals, ploughs, clay tablets (virtually everlasting) for records, it can mean only one thing : The class of people who saw better productive methods abroad had nothing in common with the producers at home, nor any incentive for change. This implies that whoever profited from production on the Indus had a secure grip on the expropriated surplus, negligible competition from within or without, and no danger — for a very long period — of violent opposition from their own population or foreign invaders. The Indus valley culture received its start from a seed-nucleus from some other part of the world which had a common element with that found in Sumeria (and which may after all have been itself of Indian origin), or from the upper Hilmand basin. Certainly, the traditional Indian era of 3101 B.C., supposed to begin the Kali Age, cannot be associated with any important event besides the founding of the twin cities. These settlers combined with people of a different type, founded a temple, began their pre-canal flood-and-harrow agriculture, and took to pre-cylinder-seal trade well before the third dynasty of Ur. Their methods seem to have been regulated from the start, presumably by the temple, without the stimulus of heavy competition or even the need to keep annals, records or contracts over long periods of time. To what extent the dams were cause or symptom of stagnation remains a matter for conjecture. When barbarians found the methods of campaigning which allowed them to traverse the desert, the cities crumpled up. The same system which inhibited violence towards the possessors of wealth made it impossible to find defenders for it when the need came. Yet it was the very same barbarians that wrecked the cities who also broke the stagnation, brought new regions under the plough, opened up further territories and resources in fores-

ted regions to the east, as we shall see.

NOTES AND REFERENCES:

1. A. B. Keith: *Religion and philosophy of the Veda* (Harvard Oriental Series 31-32), Cambridge, Mass, 1925; p. 10.

2. The best available survey, setting the Indus valley in its proper archaeological context, is by V. Gordon Childe: *New light on the most ancient East* (London, 1935, 2nd ed. 1952). R. E. M. Wheeler gives an excellent discussion in his prologue volume to the Cambridge history: *The Indus civilization*; in *Ancient India* 3, (1947) p. 81 ff. he discussed the archaeological evidence for Aryan conquest and occupation at Harappā, while criticizing the deplorably inadequate work of his predecessors: J. Marshall: *Mohenjo-dāro and the Indus culture*, 2 vol. (London 1931); E. J. H. Mackay: *Further excavations at Mohenjo-dāro*, 2 vol. (Delhi 1938). For Harappā, see M. S. Vats: *Excavations at Harappā* (Delhi 1940). A readable summary by S. Piggott: *Prehistoric India* (Pelican Books, A 205, London, 1950) is perfunctory for the vedic period. All of these lack any careful study of techniques whereby the implements and utensils were produced and utilized. R. D. Bannerjee, who first excavated the stupa mound and guessed that the site was the original source of the mysterious seals that had been known before, as well as K. N. Dikshit who drove the first trench across the main site, used to say that the discovery of the Indus civilization was delayed by laziness on the part of a predecessor. This worthy reported, on the strength of Indus brickbats (which were of almost British dimensions) brought to him by his workmen that he had inspected the ruins only to conclude that they were modern. Brick-size is a useful index in the Gangetic basin, where the bricks decrease steadily from the enormous pre-Asokan fabric to the little ones of the late Mughal period.

3. This suggestion was, so far as I know, first made by the late Birbal Sāhni, who noted the occurrence of stone-age tools on the Zogi-la pass, reasoning that it must have been free from snow, hence at a lower altitude when the tools were first made. This meant the rise of the Himālayan ranges in proto-historical times.

4. C. J. Gadd: *Proc. Brit. Acad.* 18, 1932, pp. 191-210; Henri Frankfort: *Cylinder seals* (London, 1939) pp. 304-307; Henri Frankfort, rather reluctantly, in his report *Ann. Bibliography Ind. Archaeology* (Leiden, 1934) p. 11, without following it up to logical conclusions. Any attempt at dating must now be corrected according to W. F. Albright's chronology, which places Hammurabi in the year 1728-1686 B.C. instead of 200 to 300 years earlier; cf. *BASOR*, 126, pp. 20-26; 88.28-36.

5. Prāṇ Nāth: *Ind. Hist. Quarterly* VII. 1931, 1-52; first pointed this out in a paper which otherwise confuses the reader.

6. L. A. Waddell: *Indo-Sumerian seals deciphered* (London, 1925). B. Hrozny: *Die älteste Geschichte Vorderasiens und Indiens* (Prag.

Melantrich, 1941-3). H. Heras, summarizing his own work in his *Studies in Proto-Indo-Mediterranean culture* vol. I, Bombay 1953 [see also *Ampurias* (Barcelona, 1940) No. 1, pp. 5-81], read the signs as proto-Dravidian. For other references, see A. L. Basham, *BSOAS*, 13. (1951), 140-5, a critical review, to which add G. Piccioli *IA*. 62, 1933. 213-5 for Etruscan parallels. Dr. Basham himself adds J. Q. Vives: *Aportaciones a la interpretación de la escritura proto-Indica*, Madrid-Barcelona, 1946.

7. The late R. D. Bannerjee used to tell his friends that he had discovered a bi-lingual inscription at Mohenjo-dāro, but covered it up just to expose the incompetence of others; he proposed to rediscover it at a suitable date, but the statement was not taken seriously by those who heard it.

8. This is the extremely doubtful Vikram-khol inscription, discovered by Swāmi Jñānānanda; *cf.* K. P. Jayaswāl, *Indian Antiquary* 62. 1933. 58-60, where the plates are given with unhelpful comment.

9. A. L. Oppenheim: *The seafaring Merchants of Ur.* (*JAOS*. 74, 1954, pp. 6-17); this is based upon analysis of H. H. Figulla and W. J. Martin's *Letters and documents of the Old-Babylonian period* (London, 1953, as vol. V of texts from Woolley's Ur excavations). I owe both references and much additional information to valuable discussions with Mr. R. D. Barnett of the British Museum.

10. See my note *Origin and development of silver coinage in India.* (*Current Science*, Sept. 1941, p. 396). O. Neugebauer read the cuneiform marks differently, without being able to decipher them: Mr. Barnett is doubtful about their being cuneiform at all; but neither had been able to see the original pieces of silver, while published photographs, including mine, are none too good.

11. Fausböll no. 339; the best translation is in German, by J. Dutoit (Leipzig, 1925). The place is called *bāveru* (= *babiruś* = Babylon). The Indian traders first sold their crow, as a great rarity, then brought a peacock on their second voyage to make even greater profit. The compass-crow is mentioned in *Jātaka* 384 as normal aid to sea navigation and again in *DN*. 11 (*Kevaṭṭha-sutta*, end) as an old procedure or event. Pliny (*Hist. Nat.* 6) mentions compass-birds for navigation in Ceylon. Of course, the Jātaka story is poor evidence of Indo-Babylonian trade.

12. H. Frankfort: *Cylinder Seals* (London, 1939), plate XI. *m*; the seal also depicts Gilgamesh strangling lions. H. Heras interpreted this as referring to Noah's ark (*The crow of Noe*, Catholic Biblical Quarterly 10, 1948, pp. 131-139); Noah's sending out the crow to find the nearest direction to land, followed by a homing pigeon to make sure that the land was wooded, is an excellent piece of ancient navigation.

13. The "sacrifice" seal (fig. 11) with the seven sages, a greater figure performing some rite, and another floating between heaven and earth could easily be the origin of the Viśvāmitra legend, where that

sage, in gratitude, raised king Triśaṅku to the heavens, only to have the gods throw him down. As a compromise, the unfortunate prince remains suspended as a constellation in the sky. The tree within which the figure with three-peaked crown hovers is shown by its leaves to be the pipal (*Ficus religiosa*).

14. This has been denied altogether, as no mark of knot or parcel is seen on the reverse of the sealings found in the Indus valley. However, it is known that cultic seals in Mesopotamia differed only in size, not design, from those used in sealing merchandise. The very act of sealing, even for protection of trade goods, was also a religious act in the old days. One of the early directors of excavations at Mohenjo-dāro showed me photographs of what he believed to be the traces of a reed bundle which *might* have been sealed; seals for trade packages and on state licences were regularly inspected from the 4th century B.C. onwards, while there is no reason to believe that the custom suddenly came into fashion at that period.

15. The hill of clinker which was later spread out on the Hindu University grounds at Banāras illustrates my meaning. It originated from the work of *kāsāra* families who cast bell-metal pots, cups and plates on the site for many generations. Incidentally the modern village names *Nagvā* and *Laṅkā* of the Hindu University neighbourhood are recognizable in the Kamauli charter (*EI.* 4.113) of Govindacandra Gāhaḍavāla (A.D. 1141-2), though the editor failed to make the identification, while there is nothing to show that the main settlement was then of workers in mental.

16. C. Benveniste and L. Renou: *Vṛtra et Vṛthragna* (Paris, 1934), particularly p. 196.

CHAPTER IV

THE ARYANS IN THE LAND OF THE SEVEN RIVERS

4.1. Aryans outside India.
4.2. ~~Rgvedic information.~~
4.3. Panis and new tribes.
4.4. Origins of caste.
4.5. Brahmin clans.

THE people who first used the vedas as their sacred text, who first spoke the Sanskrit language and worshipped a particular group of deities led by Indra, called themselves *ārya*. The term persists throughout later Sanskrit and its derivative languages, ultimately to become just a respectful salutation. In between, *ārya* passed through the meanings "noble," "well-born," "free." Western scholars from the nineteenth century onwards used the word Aryan to denote a considerable group of closely related languages : Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, the Teutonic, Slav and Romance types. An "Aryan Race" was considered for some time as ridiculous a concept as a "Brachycephalic grammar." This conclusion may still be retained, not because there were no Aryan people in antiquity but because the whole concept of race as based upon skeletal measurements, hair-colour, skin pigmentation, colour of eyes, is now regarded as of doubtful genetic validity. Nevertheless, it was found that, in antiquity, certain tribes outside India did claim to be Aryans. The addition of Hittite to the known Aryan languages gave some further information about the Aryans in history. Comparison of several languages yielded certain characteristic names of gods and men which then

allowed recognition of Aryan cults and princes. Not all the people speaking Aryan languages show this common feature, but there is enough in common between vedic and Iranian Aryans to allow their being classed together while kinship terminology shows deeper community of origin, in some measure, with the Romans, Greeks, Slavs, Teutons. With the first appearance of these people in history were directly associated considerable political upheavals in Mesopotamia, Egypt, India, and even the far less-developed Danube valley and Scandinavia (Battle-axe folk). For example: the Old Testament place-name Goshen has not a Hebrew but Aryan etymology, from *go* = cattle; it marks the invasion of Canaan by strange pastoral raiders of a new type.

4.1. The Aryans[1] who destroyed the Indus cities made their first appearance about the beginning of the second millennium B.C. Many separate groups of Aryans were fully established in the Fertile Crescent at the eastern end of the Mediterranean by the middle of the 2nd millennium, as heirs to the Sumerian and Semitic civilizations. The name Shashank, so common for Pharaohs of the 22nd and 23rd dynasties of Egypt (from B.C. 945 down) has a definitely Aryan (Sanskrit *Śaśāṅka*) sound. The ancestors of this dynasty were immigrants allied with tribes of known Aryan character: Tyrrhenians, Sardinians, &c. However, the Aryans do not form a single "culture" in the archaeologist's sense of the word, so that a totally new procedure from that of the preceding chapter is necessary to deal with them. There is no characteristically Aryan pottery, tool, weapon, as such. The Aryans regularly adopted whatever suited them, from the people with whom they came into contact. They were not genetically or physically homogeneous. Adoption was frequent, as to some extent intermarriage with other people who had been Aryanized, whether by conquest or some other type of contact. In spite of many learned articles, there is no proven Aryan skull form; nasal-index measurements are not applicable to grave remains. Both vary within a few generations if living conditions should change, and vary from class to class within a class-society. Nevertheless, certain tribes among the whole Indo-European group were conscious of being Aryans in some ethnic sense.

For example, Darius I of Persia proclaims in his grave-inscription (486 B.C.) that he was *Pārsa, Pārsahya puthra*, Ārya, *Ārya cithra* ='A Persian, son of a Persian, an Aryan of Aryan descent.' The Arioi were in occupation of parts of Iran (= Ariana) and Afghanistan to the Indus, at the time of Alexander's invasion (Strabo 15.2.9), the Arianoi along the Indus. The Arii are mentioned by Tacitus as the most feared tribe among the Germans, unmatched in warfare though too slothful to press their superiority. The mass of negatives above, therefore, only lead to the conclusion that "Aryan" meant essentially a new way of life and speech.

Many of the historical Aryan groups are best known as rulers of mixed type over limited regions, such as the Kassites and Hittites or as immigrant raiders and settlers like the Greeks. Their common features in pre-history may be restored with some certainty: highly versatile, warriors, marauders, patriarchal tribesmen of the bronze age whose main subsistence had been cattle. They early learned and spread the use of iron. The horse first gained its military importance with them (particularly among the Kassites) but hitched to the fast Aryan chariot, not ridden. The Sumerians had used asses, for royal chariots only, and not on a large scale. The harness was rather inefficient, as it tended to choke the horse, having been simply transferred from the ox and bull that had long been yoked to heavy wagons and ploughs. It was not till a few centuries later that the horse was also ridden by all military people. Assyrian cavalry proved itself the best of its day. The use of the horse at the plough seems to be a peculiarly north-European innovation. The exclusive military use of the beast left its mark upon society; there arose a new social upper class, the equestrian order of those entitled to possess and use horses. The words cavalier and chivalry are bequeathed to us by the horse age just as 'civilization' derives from city life.

The community of names and cults was particularly strong between Iranians and Indo-Aryans. People who live by similar means of production tend to develop similar observances in primitive times; but common names mean some contact. Cremation seems first to be found on a fairly large scale among the Aryans. The rite could not have gained sanction, if known

at all, before the age of metals. Cremation purged the body of its corruptible dross, just as the ore was reduced by fire to its essential pure metal. As the fire was sacred, in fact the leading Vedic god and the chief object of veneration among Iranians, letting it touch the unclean corpse meant a revolutionary change in primitive thought. The Iranians ultimately preferred decarnation by carrion-eating birds and beasts ; yet the Iranian corpse-tower *dakhma* originally meant 'the place of burning.' India shows the same custom of corpse-exposure among supposed Aryans, down to about the 10th century A.D. Cremation was originally reserved for the fire-priests, or chiefs, to be slowly adopted by people lower in the scale. The bones and ashes left after the flesh had been removed were given a second ceremonial funeral in India, being at one time buried in urns or cists. Later custom demanded their scattering in a sacred river.

All this shows that the Aryans differed considerably among themselves. However, the historical movements of the subgroup that affects India can be traced with fair certainty, in two great waves of pastoral tribesmen originating in the Khorezm region. The first started about the beginning of the 2nd millennium B.C., the second towards the end. The Iranian Var of king Yima (Indian Yama, later god of death), the mythical region of happiness where heat, cold, hunger, death could not penetrate (*Yasna* 9.4-5), has been identified by excavations (which yield the exact dimensions recorded in the sacred books) as sublimated from a stone enclosure within which the cattle were left free, while the people lived in rooms in the walls. This must also have been the prototype of the Augean stables cleansed by Herakles. Just why the emigrations began is not clear, for there is no evidence of any great internal catastrophe. Perhaps steady increase of population sufficed as cause. Some of these pastoral nomads went from Khorezm as conquerors to the Russian steppes. Others rounded the Caspian into Asia Minor. Another group appears as the Battle-Axe people of the Danube valley and upper Europe. Their quick adaptability is proved by maritime ventures, as with the Greeks ; even the Ṛgveda, which deals primarily with the upper Punjāb, speaks occasionally of ships (with as many

as a hundred oars) being driven three days distance from the nearest land (*RV*. 1.116.4-5).

A good reason for treating the Aryans as a unit is their great historical achievement, namely the demolition of barriers between numerous primitive, conservative, peasant communities each of which had separately preserved its archaic tools and beliefs. The Arabs 2000 years later showed a parallel action — including the linguistic change — upon a different social level. It is known that such people could carry their conservatism to the point of extinction, as for example the Ghassulians (near the Dead Sea) and similar little isolated groups known only by their extremely complicated decorations. On a somewhat larger scale were the operations of the megalithic builders of Britain, Iberia, or South India. They used up their comparatively meagre surplus in cults of the dead which contributed nothing to the advancement of society. Malta at the end of the stone age was a sacred island which could only have left its crowded ossuarial remains by a combination of trade and religion ; the latter quite overshadowed whatever advantages might have accrued to humanity from the former. The Mesopotamian and Indus river valleys carried the process to a higher level, but again headed towards stagnation. We have noted in particular the inability of the city-builders on the Indus to adopt superior tools and methods of food production well within their technical reach. Egypt spent its greater surplus in building vast stone pyramids with watch-maker's accuracy ; the whole country was gradually eaten up by the cult of the dead and its priest class. The Aryans trampled down so many isolated primitive groups, and their beliefs, as to create the pre-conditions for the formation of a new type of society from the remains. They were not themselves consciously nor magnanimously bent upon the creation of that society. They acted in their own destructive rapacious manner, for immediate gain. The chief contribution of the Aryans is, therefore, the introduction of new relations of production, on a scale vast enough to make a substantial difference of quality ; many people previously separated were involved by force in new types of social organization. The basis was a new availability to all of skills, tools, production techniques that had remained local secrets till then. This

meant flexibility in adoption, versatility of improvisation. It meant new barter, hence new commodity production. The result was the opening up of new regions to cultivation by methods which the more or less ingrown local populations had not dreamt of using. All this may be read from a wide-spread archaeological record. The methods whereby these innovations were introduced were violent ; but at least they effected more and greater improvements than did previous trade, warfare, or ritual killing. From the age of Sargon to that of the last Assyrian kings, we see wars in the Near East fought on a growing scale, with increasing cruelty, without compensatory improvements. Such conquests may be compared with the drought, which indeed withered up Mesopotamia by ruining irrigation ; the Aryans resembled the destructive flood, which fertilises the soil to promote new growth. The only social function of the overdeveloped ritual and cults of the dead could have been to preserve the *status quo*. This discouraged innovation, atrophied the mind. The Aryan raids swept away the older classes with their rituals.

The barriers so torn down could never be effectively re-erected because the Aryans left a priceless means of intercourse, a simpler language distributed over a vast region. They had no alphabet of their own, but simplified, adopted, and spread whatever was available from the cuneiform and Phoenician scripts. The difference was that literacy was no longer the monopoly of the priests, a small class of professional scribes, or narrow, closed merchant guilds. On the other hand, older records — if any — vanished while archaeological data in fixed stratification decreased. The Aryan settlements shifted constantly and left far less durable remains than those of the static Indus culture. None of the vedic records yield a chronology, not even the relative chronology of a stratified pottery sequence. The difficulty of discovering whether a specific component of Indian society is Aryan or not is augmented by the fact that words change their meaning over the centuries ; observances tend to change too, with the means of production. It is sometimes doubtful whether a feature common to Iranians and Indic Aryans could not have been adopted by both from earlier societies, since these earlier societies had great points

of similarity : say, the Indus and Sumerian urban cultures. Finally, the normal sequence of development from matriarchy to patriarchy is disturbed by the later, comparatively peaceful, assimilation of non-Aryan Indians to the Aryan way of life and of speech ; matriarchal features such as *strī-dhana* (a small amount of personal property handed down in the female line) re-appear rather late in the Indian tradition, and cannot be explained in any other way except by such relatively peaceful assimilation of the old to the new manner of life. A little caution enables such difficulties to be overcome, provided our definition of history is kept in mind.

4.2. The main source for the period of Aryan invasion, destruction, conquest is the oldest of the four vedas (discussed in chap. V) the Ṛgveda,[2] with very little support from archaeology. The need for such support may be seen from the complete reorientation which is called for in vedic studies by Indus valley excavations ; the Hariyūpīyā of *RV*. 6.27.5 was once identified not with the city of Harappā but with the Haliāb or Ariob river, a tributary of the Kurum, the whole battle being laid in Afghanistan. The Indus decline, on Albright's chronology, comes at about 1750 B. C. Ṛgvedic actions are put at about 1500[3] B. C. (on internal evidence, not clear to me). The period of regular settlement represented by the Yajurveda must have begun about 800 B. C. The Ṛgveda has therefore to be divided into strata on the basis of language alone, much of which has now become obscure ; some of it was misinterpreted by later commentators to whom the Veda was the height of mystical philosophy. In one respect alone is the critic reasonably happy : the text of the Ṛgveda is fixed with far greater certainty than anything in classical Sanskrit. Ṛgvedic hymns (*sūkta*) were regarded as immutable, in existence from eternity, not composed but only 'seen' by the various seers. The vedas (particularly the *RV*) were preserved intact, without change, by a most rigid discipline which we know from the practice of the later priest-class, the brahmins. The novice went to some forest retreat to learn from a particular teacher. For a period of twelve years or more, he tended the *guru's* cattle, gathered (but never produced) food for him, while the teacher imparted knowledge of the scriptures. The first step was to learn to

recite the sacred work syllable by syllable, without a single mistake. The meaning was taught through long discourses, but the pupil had first to carry the entire text in his head. This gave the priests a monopoly of the book deliberately kept unwritten (as with the Druids in Caesar's Gaul). It gave the priests a matchless prestige among the people, a solidarity in action. Briefly, it made them into a class and a powerful one which influenced later Indian history.

The Aryans appear as a patriarchal people ; the gods are overwhelmingly male, the real god being *agni*, the sacred fire (as with the Iranians), with personified gods led by a good Aryan chief, Indra. Invincible in battle, with his weapon the crushing *vajra* (a mace, later 'thunderbolt'), he fights from a swift chariot, gets drunk on the still unidentified, sacred heady *soma* (Iranian *haoma*) wine, shatters cities and dams, frees the rivers and makes water available to his people ; incessantly robs the stores (*nidhi*) of the godless enemies, against whom he uses guile as well as force. A god he superseded was Varuṇa, the Greek *ouranos*, a sky deity of more benign aspect but able to strike mortals down with some disease in punishment. Goddesses are very few, most prominent among them Iḷā who seems merely the personified libation. Uṣas the dawn-goddess (who is philologically equated to the Homeric Eôs but is far more important here, nearer to the Mesopotamian Ishtar) continued to be worshipped even after losing a conflict with Indra. The gods are not married, a female consort appears very rarely; the gods' wives are called *gnās* collectively, with very little to do. Presumably, this reflects the absence of regular pairing or of marriage to an individual in Aryan society of the time and place. There is an old craftsman-god *Tvaṣṭṛ*, unknown outside India, who appears at times as the creator, a concept which was not needed in primitive times when what was manufactured was of far less importance to man than what came from the fertile mother-goddess, the earth. I have shown elsewhere[4] that this craftsman-god was adopted from the pre-Aryans, presumably along with their craftsmen. The war chariot, whose details and dimensions may be accurately restored from the veda, needed excellent craftsmanship. Heavier ox-drawn *anas* carts

were used also for transport.

The plough was known as *sīra*. The main cereal barley (*yava*) gave its name to grain in general. Wheat (*godhūma*, the *bosmoron* of the Greeks) and rice (*vrīhi*) are not explicitly mentioned in this oldest veda. The sickle (*dātra*), a digging tool *khanitra* were also known. Settlers (*viś*) are peasants (*kṛṣṭi*), unploughed fields are *akṛṣīvala*. There is nothing about division of land or land-ownership, let alone buying or selling land, or for that matter any commodities. The main source of wealth, its very measure, was cattle ; in the second line, horses. Camels were given away by a chieftain. The buffalo *mahiṣa* is 'the powerful beast,' but this very useful agricultural animal seems to have been still untamed. Cattle and horses of each kind, even of each separate colour, had their special designation. Naturally, the fight for water had a special importance. Indra is called *apsu-jit*, the 'water-conqueror' (*RV*. 8.13.2, 1.100.11, 6.44.18, &c.). It was for the sake of water that he overthrew the brazen cities of the Dasyus in *RV*. 2.20.8, and elsewhere. Not only Indra but all the peoples fight for water (*RV*. 4.24.4). They fight for children (*tanaye*), cattle (*goṣu*), water (*apsu*) (*RV*. 6.25.4) ; naturally both sides pray to Indra for victory, which shows the rise of warfare between Aryan tribes. The multiple contradictions between a pastoral nomadic life, the tradition of fruitful raids upon civilizations now vanished, and the necessity of settled agriculture were beginning to develop.

Before going on to the political developments in the Indus valley, it might be pointed out that contact with Aryan people and tradition outside India was not broken. The characteristic Indian humped bull, not generally known elsewhere, appears, about 1000 A.D. on a few Syro-Hittite seals (W. H. Ward: *Seal Cylinders of Western Asia*, Washington, D.C., 1910 ; nos. 922, 930 etc.). The Uṣas of the *RV*. who so often bares her breast and body to the common gaze is precisely represented in seals of the same locality and period (Ward *loc. cit.* Chapter L) ; both are sometimes winged. Just what this signifies is not clear, perhaps recoil of some Aryans from India. The second wave seems also to be represented in the Ṛgveda, by an occa-

sional Persian name, and perhaps Persian historical characters. The 'kinless' chief Suśravas of *RV*. 1.53.9-10, who fought and won against twenty opposing kings, is almost certainly the Iranian Kavi Huśravas shown to us avenging a father's death in the Avesta; Turaṇyu and Tūrvayāṇa ('swiftly advancing') might indicate Turanians, whoever they really were. *RV*. 8.6.46 praises Tirindira, who is connected with a Parśu, hence might be a Persian. The land of the seven rivers is known to the Avesta as one of the Aryan regions. Of the original seven great rivers, two dried up: the Dṛṣadvatī of the Ṛgveda is the dry bed of the Ghaggar, while the Sarasvatī (which then met it and the Indus to flow to the sea) had, by the time of the exegetical works called the Brāhmaṇas, begun to terminate in the desert. Today, it is a small river in the East Punjab; its name might have been transferred from the Iranian Harahvaiti, the Araqattu of an inscription by Tiglath-Pileser III. In that case, the original Sarasvatī is the Hilmand; a fact which archaeologists would do well to keep in mind for future use in spite of inconclusive finds as at Mundigak. The name Irāvatī shifted from the Rāvī to the main Burmese river: the little Candrabhāgā which flows past Paṇḍharpūr was named after the Chenāb. Such transfers of name are common.

There are less marked but unmistakable traces of other contacts with older culture, whether within India or outside. For example, *RV*. 5.45.1-3 describes the Sun-god as he bursts the mountain, throws open the doors; the scene is precisely depicted on Mesopotamian seals (fig. 17), where two doors without any building are shown as being thrown open while between them the Sun-god has half-emerged from the mountain.



Fig. 17. The Sun-god bursts the mountain, the gates are thrown open.

Perhaps the most important of these common myths which may be collated with the seals is that of Indra's decapitation of the three-headed son of Tvaṣṭṛ. The feat is described in *RV*. 10.8 by the 'son' himself, though he is supposed to

have been killed.[3] This son Tvāṣṭra appears, nevertheless, as one of the earliest Upaniṣadic teachers. His 'killing' left an indelible mark upon brahmin myth, as the first case of a king's decapitation of his own fire-priest, a dangerous precedent. The three heads became three varieties of partridges, of which at least two have left brahmin clan-names behind them. This legend[4] gains in significance with the discovery of a three-*faced* god on Indus seals (fig. 18) ; the three faces make it certain that he is a lunar deity like the later Śiva who bears the crescent moon as his crest. Remarkably enough, the myth occurs also in the Avesta, though Indra drops out, as transformed into a demon (*daeva*, earlier, 'god') by the Zoroastrian reform and mentioned as a demon elsewhere by the Avesta. The three-headed opponent beheaded there is Azi Dahāka, the Zohāk of the *Shāh Nameh*; he too survived the decapitation to tempt the prophet Zoroaster. The killer of Azi Dahāka was the hero Thraetona Āthvya, born in the 'four-cornered *vareṇa*' (which Parsis take to be the modern Gīlān south of the Caspian, but which should rather mean) the 'land of the Vars', hence Khorezm, from which the Aryan waves started. Zohāk is described as with two snakes' heads sprouting from his shoulders, to each of which a human being had to be fed daily; Azi is the same as the Sanskrit *ahi*, snake. A god with human head but a supplementary snake's head coming out of each shoulder is found in the Mesopotamian seals, as Nin-giś-zi-da in the older and Tiśpak in the later periods. Thus there is depicted a clash of cults. The killer is not Thraetona Āthvya in India but Trita Āptya accompanied by Indra. The second portions of the names agree, but Trita can only be the Iranian Thrita of the Sāma family (cf. *Yasna*. 9.7-11), who killed no demons. In the Ṛgveda, the nearest we get to Thraetona is Traitana, who was himself a Dāsa (enemy) and tried to behead the brahmin Dīrghatamas ('long darkness'); the weapon recoiled upon



Fig. 18. Three-faced god on Indus seals.

the user to split his own breast and shoulders. It would appear that the myth is here told to some extent from the other side, without being turned around completely. This is only one of the many features of the Ṛgveda which lead us to believe that there was assimilation both of extra-Indian and of Indic pre-Aryan material, hence of people as well. A full discussion of this one legend, which has to be reported here with extreme compression, would require a complete volume by itself.

Indra, Varuṇa, the Nāsatyas (Indian Dioscuri), and other Indo-Aryan gods occur in the Boghāz-Koi[5] texts; the Mitannians of the upper Euphrates worshipped them about 1400 B. C. Aryan tribes of (or similar to) the Medians were settled about lake Urmieh not later than that period, though quite without the superiority they later acquired by fighting. The chariot of the specially benign Nāsatyas is drawn by asses, which has a foreign pre-Aryan flavour.

4.3. Fascinating though the study and disentanglement of myth may be, it takes us too far away from our historical objective. The main reason why we must engage in it is that remote events in the Ṛgveda—as in any Sanskrit work—tend to be swallowed up by myth and legend. Was Indra actually a human Aryan chief when his feats are described on the battlefield, or did he participate only from on high? Certainly, the older enemies always seem to be represented as demons. The Seven Mothers 'of truth (*ṛta*)' are Ṛgvedic, mentioned repeatedly with the curious adjective *yahvī* (? 'never-resting'), seem almost certainly to denote the seven rivers; water was so important that the fine Ṛgvedic concept of *ṛta* (truth, justice, what is right) appears connected with it: Indra in *RV*. 5.12.2. is asked to set free 'the streams of *ṛta*'. The word *vaṇik* occurs just once as 'merchant'. This was seen to be derived from Paṇi, which is the name of a folk hostile to Indra and his followers. In *RV*. 10.108, we have a famous though late dialogue in which the goddess Saramā appears as messenger of Indra to the Paṇis. She is a canine female deity, but the termination *-mā* shows that she was a mother-goddess, like the later *Umā*, *Ramā*, and others. Her demand, or rather Indra's, is for cattle from the Paṇis.

Later explanations add that the cattle had been stolen from Indra and the gods, but there is nothing to that effect in the hymn. What we have is a blunt ultimatum for tribute or ransom, rejected by the Paṇis. Eventually, the Paṇis were labelled demons, as enemies of the god Indra. This hymn was undoubtedly acted out in the ritual to commemorate great raids and loot in days gone by. Such ritual imitated history, which was thus encouraged to repeat itself. The current Marāthā ceremony of *sīmollaṅghana* and the symbolic loot of gold (represented by certain leaves) is a modern example; it commemorates the 18th century custom of annual raids. The rite survives the social form with changed content. In *RV*. 6.45.31-33, Bṛbu, highest of the Pāṇis, is praised for his generosity by the seer Bharadvāja, who as brahmin and Aryan should have been on the other side. This caused some embarrassment to later brahmins, who admit that Bṛbu was a *takṣan* ('carpenter'), certainly not an Āryan, but that the seer was blameless in accepting the gifts. Such praises for gifts (*dānastuti*) yield perhaps the most reliable historical information in the *RV*., which is a liturgical collection (without prose glosses) meant only for ritual use. In these *dānastutis* are mentioned tribes like the Cedi which appear more prominently in the epic Mahābhārata. Apparently, the later bards began with a benedictive vedic hymn before the recital of some episode from the epic. The *dānastutis* were the connecting links of past and present tradition, plus encouragement to contemporary generosity; such a coda would be one of the main reasons why the tradition continued to live. The idea that gifts to brahmins have special importance was to grow out of these panegyrics to far greater importance, in a later historical context.

To revert to the Paṇis: they appear in general as mercenary, rich, greedy, treacherous enemies of the Aryans; their stored treasures were looted in *RV*. 2.24.6-7. As said before, some sort of modus vivendi was ultimately worked out, perhaps because some Aryans became fellow traders, *vaṇik*. The major enemies are not the Paṇis but the Dasyu or Dāsa. The word later came to mean slave or rather helot, just as both 'slave' and 'helot' are derived from ethnic or

place names. The Dasyus had their own kings ; a priest Vaśa Aśvya (*RV*. 8.46.32) received gifts from two Dāsa rulers Balbūtha and Tarukṣa (or just one named Balbūtha Tarukṣa) amounting to a hundred camels ; earlier in the same hymn, the same poet lauds the generosity of Kānīta Pṛthuśravas, an Aryan at least in name. Again, we find a brahmin playing with both sides. Nevertheless, the Dāsas in general were not so lucky, for their earlier rulers appear as demons smashed by Indra. Of these, Vṛtra has already been explained as a generic obstacle or enemy. Arbuda was trampled underfoot by Indra in *RV*. 1.51.6 and elsewhere, without anything more being known of him than that he was a Dāsa. Kuyava of *RV*. 1.103.8, 1.104.3 has a name meaning literally 'bad barley', i.e. wild barley, or a poor harvest. He seems in a way identical with the Dasyu Namuci, with whom Indra had a tougher fight, and who cannot be explained away as a nature- or harvest-myth. In *RV*. 5.30, we have a full description of the battle between Indra and Namuci, with whom Indra had had a pact. Indra tricked him in some way and struck off his head ; Namuci had been the lord of the (two) rivers — perhaps his wives ! His army (or weapons) consisted of women, whereat Indra laughed. The *dānastuti* mentions Ruśama, a tribal name, later associated with the salt-mine region of the Punjab. In *RV*. 2.20.6, Indra is spoken as having 'cut off the dear head of the Dāsa Arśasānas'; the cause of endearment does not appear, unless the seer Gṛtsamada felt sympathy for the 'demon.'[6]

In *RV*. 1.51.11, Indra burst the powerful strongholds of Śuṣṇa as in *RV*. 8.1.28. Śuṣṇa can be taken as the demon of drought, but then the *pur*, which could mean fortified place or citadel, loses its meaning — unless we have here a settlement broken up to release water that had been dammed. The demon Pipru also had such *pur* strongholds shattered by Indra (*RV*. 1.51.5 ; 6.20.7) for the Aryan Ṛjiśvan, who gained the wealth contained therein. The most prominent of these enemies was Śambara with whom Varcin was allied. Śambara held many *pur* strongholds, being enemy of Divodāsa — who brings us to the historical stratum of the *RV*. That is, we now read of struggles between human protagonists, not of gods against

demons. Divodāsa had no city, nor did any of his descendants, as far as vedic information goes.

⌊Indra is 'the breaker of cities' (*puraṃdara*), but neither Indra nor any follower of his is described as builder or possessor of a city. None of them ever construct anything of masonry. The word for brick *iṣṭā* does not occur in this veda, only in later ones, where the bricks were first used only for building sacrificial altars. The standard Aryan settlement is a *grāma*, which continued to mean village, while it could even denote an overnight encampment. The Ṛgvedic people destroyed Indus cities without a reoccupation sufficient to make an impression upon their sacred book. They failed to start new cities of their own, which could hardly be of any use to pastoral raiders. That is, the contribution of the Aryans had its negative feature. It took at least half a millennium for the new types of production to reach an urban stage. Much was lost that the older society had developed.⌋

⌊The later Ṛgvedic stage shows recombination of Aryans with pre-Aryans or non-Aryans. The new tribes continued to fight vigorously among themselves. Divodāsa means 'servant of heaven', but Dāsa was then a non-Aryan tribal name too. The termination makes it likely that here is not merely abstract devotion to heaven, but that a Dāsa had been adopted into the Aryan fold ; there may be more than one Divodāsa in the Ṛgveda, the most famous being called *atithi-gva*, he whose cattle are welcome to graze wherever they like. His successor king Sudās (later written as Sudāsa ; the earlier form means 'the good giver') Paijavana brings us to the greatest political upheaval in the later stratum of the Ṛgveda, the battle against the 'Ten Kings'. These ten kings are given only by the tribal names, many of which are demonstrably Aryan. The tribe of Sudās was the Tṛtsus, a sub-group of the Bharatas from whom derives the name Bhārata for the whole of India. The fight is repeatedly mentioned in passing (say *RV*. 7.83.6), but in greater detail in *RV*. 7.18. The opponents crushed in battle are named as Śimyu, Turvaśa, Yakṣu, Matsya, Bhṛgu, Druhyu, Paktha, Bhalāna, Alina, Viṣāṇin. Of these, *matsya* = fish, *alina* = bee, are totemic ; *viṣāṇin* = 'horned', reminds us of the horned deities of Indus seals, as of the horned crowns of Mesopotamian

deities; they seem to be non-Aryan though called holy (*śivāsas*). The seer claims that '(Indra) the table-guest of the Aryans' came to aid the Tṛtsus; in *RV*. 7.83.1, Indra is called on to help king Sudās against Dāsa and Aryan enemies. The Paktha tribe above has been conjecturally identified by Lassen and others with the *Pakthyes* known to Greeks of Alexander's time in the same region, and with the modern Pakhtoons (Paṭhāns). In *RV*. 7.18.13, the Tṛtsus pray for victory against the Pūrus of evil speech (*mṛdhravāc*). The Pūru tribe seems to have been as Aryan as any. It survived in the Mahābhārata story, and to Alexander's time (perhaps in the modern Punjābī surname Pūrī); both king Pōros defeated by the Macedonian and his nephew of the same name show that the tribal chief was then still called by the tribal name outside his group. A king Pōros (Strabo 15.1.73; Pandion, 15.1.4) sent an embassy to Augustus Caesar. The strangest of the ten names is that of Bhṛgu, which may be philologically equivalent to 'Phrygian', but survives in India only as the name of a brahmin clan * which became important long after the Ṛgvedic period. In the *RV*., their chariot is specially praised; the name could also mean 'potter', as it did for a time in Pāli. The original number of Aryan tribes seems to have been five; the "Five Peoples" (*pañca janāḥ* or *pañca kṛṣṭayaḥ*) are repeatedly mentioned (though nowhere named explicitly) as synonymous with Aryan society as a whole.

This desperate fight was again for water. *RV*. 7.18.8 (and Sāyaṇa on *RV*. 7.18.5) tells us that the fools whom Sudās vanquished had tried to divert the Paruṣṇī (a stretch of the Rāvī). The Aryans, with their new ideal of prowess in battle

*The śigrus of *RV*. 7.18.19, also enemies of Sudās also left a gotra among brahmins, though not to be found in any of the standard lists; namely, the *śaigrava gotra* (Lüders no. 82) at Mathurā. The *śigru* is identified as the *Moringa pterygosperma*, "a kind of horse-radish, *śobhāñjana*; the root and leaves and flowers are eaten". But if the identification be not in error, the Latin name indicates the drum-stick tree whose pods make a good kitchen vegetable. *Ms*. 6.14 forbids it as food for the *vānaprastha* forest-hermit, along with ground-mushrooms, but reasons are not given; it could not have been poisonous, as the mushrooms might have been. The commentator says that *śigrukam* is a famous vegetable of Balkh (Himalayan regions). There is no doubt about the food-totemic nature of the name, which might explain the tabu.

as man's supreme aim, had succeeded in making existence increasingly difficult even for themselves. The solution found was to move on eastwards. The winners of the Ten-king battle, the Bharatas, themselves followed the trend, whether because of pressure from later invaders or in search of greener pastures. At any rate, the grammarian Patañjali writing about 200 B.C. gives 'Eastern Bharatas' as an example of redundancy, 'because there are no Bharatas except in the East'. As East then meant some portion of the Gangetic valley, the Bharatas had moved a good distance from the scene of their great victory.

4.4. The Aryans who advanced (not later than 1000 B.C.) to the east from the Punjab differed considerably from those who had burst upon the Indus cities at about 1750 B.C. It is, unfortunately, still impossible to attach a time-scale to their movements. They had tamed the elephant and the buffalo, or were soon to do so. Their chariots, horses, cattle were about the same as before, except that the humped Indus cattle now formed the greater part of the herds. This mobile food supply was indispensable in the migration, as was the cheap metal iron, which had certainly become well known to them by 1000 B.C. The plough added to food production, while potter's, weaver's, carpenter's, and other techniques learned from the Indus people remained Aryan possessions. All these would have been useless without exchange of food surplus for commodities, and a new social organization. This new organization of society made available for the first time a supply of labour whose surplus was easily expropriated, and with the aid of which new territories could be settled that had remained closed to Indus culture. The reorganization is not mere conjecture but well attested by Greek reports (330 B.C.) of a few Aryan tribes in the Punjab that had atrophied, without trade relations and surplus-exchange, in their ancient way of life, the early vedic tribal stage.

"It is said that in the country of Sopeithes there is a mountain of salt which could supply all India. Good mines, both of gold and silver, are said to exist in other mountains not far off, as Gorgos the miner has testified. The Indians [of the Punjab] being unacquainted with mining and the smelting of ores do not know their own wealth and therefore traffic with greater simplicity." (Strabo

15.1.30). "Among some tribes it is the custom to offer virgins as a prize to the victor in a boxing-match, so that they may be married though portionless. Among other tribes again the land is cultivated in common, and when the crops are collected, each person takes a load for his support throughout the year. The remainder of the produce is burned." (Strabo 15.1.66).

At the same time, this new organization of Aryan society made it possible for any aborigines met on the way to be absorbed. Polygamy also helped assimilation. There is the strong possibility that some of the Indus people had fled into the wilderness, to spread a small amount of advanced technique and culture there, but it was the Aryans who consolidated the position, who made the spread of settlements general. It would seem from new tribal and personal names that the diffusion was less of Aryans than their techniques and way of living—including language, essential for the new Aryan ritual considered indispensable by primitive man, and indistinguishable to him from the new means of production which the rites accompanied. The Ganges and Yamunā (= twin river) are barely known in the Ṛgveda, though the very heart of later Aryan culture; but sacrifices on the progressively desiccated Sarasvatī retained their special merit for a long time.

The principal change in the productive relations was the formation of a servile class from the conquered *dāsa* population; the word thereafter came to mean a helot of some sort. The *dāsa* by caste had not the right to initiation nor to bear weapons; he had no property, being himself property of the Aryan tribe as a whole, much in the same way as cattle. The *RV.* bards sang occasionally of *dāsas* as well as cattle and horses allotted by the king. The word *paśu,* which applies generally to beasts and particularly to cattle (which are to be tied up) is once applied to human beings also (*RV.* 3.62.14), which mentions two-footed and four-footed *paśus,* much as the Greeks used *andrapodon* for slaves compared to the beasts *tetrapodon.* Yet the *dāsa* was not a chattel slave, because individual property among the Aryans had not developed sufficiently, nor extensive commodity and surplus production for trade. Inasmuch as the cattle were herded in common and fields very often tilled in common, the use of the

dāsa as common tribal property is quite logical. It would be the assignment—by tribal authority—of one or more *dāsas* to labour for a particular sub-group which was to give rise to private property, and to family groups which held that property—but no longer in common. It may be supposed that these *dāsas* were the descendants of the Indus settlers who had provided the surplus for Indus cities, being persuaded thereto by some method other than force, say religion. This was the beginning of the caste system in India. The word used here *varṇa* means colour, and is justified as the Dāsas or Dasyus in general are spoken of as of dark colour ; the Aryans had a colour of their own, white, or at any rate lighter.

These Indian developments after the Aryan conquest would be all the more natural, if slavery in the Indus valley had been similar to that in Mesopotamia. There, we find two classes of slaves. The first, " whether they were (originally) prisoners of war, defaulting debtors, or even born into slavery—could escape from their status and free themselves from chattelhood by three means : They could buy their freedom with their *peculium* ; they could be ransomed by their kin ; or they could be adopted by their master ". If such a slave of either sex married a free person, the offspring of the union were free.* This is precisely as we find it in the *Arthaśāstra* 3.13. On the other hand, the *širqūtu* temple slaves were a caste even when they traded and controlled property, for intermarriage with any non-*širqūtu* could only produce offspring which again belonged to the temple. The position is like that of the śūdra in India, with the temple replaced by the Aryan tribe or later the three Aryan upper castes.

Not all Dāsas were reduced to servitude ; some rose high among the Aryans, as has been shown. A name Kṛṣṇa (= black) occurs in the list of vedic seers. It seems unlikely to denote the " genetically fair Aryan ", in spite of his knowledge of Sanskrit. The strongholds shattered by Indra are occasion-

* For this, and the quotation, I. Mendelsohn : *Slavery in the ancient Near East* (New York 1949), p. 56, p. 104 ; for the *širqūtu*, R. P. Dougherty : *The širqûtu of Babylonian deities*, Yale Or. Res. Series 5/2, New Haven, 1923. See also, I. Mendelsohn in *BASOR* 89.25-29 for the incidence of slavery.

ally described as *kṛṣṇa-garbhāḥ*, 'bearing black (people) in the womb'. It is still doubtful whether *RV*. 8.96.13-15 is a *soma* myth or the straight record that it seems to be of a fight between Indra and a Kṛṣṇa. In later times, Kṛṣṇa is the dark Hindu god recognized as incarnation of Viṣṇu (who was on the whole friendly to Indra in the *RV*, with occasional conflict, though not known outside India as an Aryan god) but the legend of conflict between him and Indra persisted.

The reason for going deeper into the question on such poor evidence is its bearing on the question of caste formation in general, and particularly the brahmin caste. The brahmin was a professional priest without parallel in Aryan tradition elsewhere; in later India, he acquired virtual monopoly of almost all ritual. It was the function of every head of a family to perform the necessary sacrifices; the head of the tribe had the heaviest duties of the sort to promote fertility of herds and fields, welfare of his people. Every adult male worshipped the fire, and could appeal to Indra, Varuṇa, or any other god without brahmin intervention. We find this in Greece and Rome as well. The Latin fire-priest *flamen* was not, as has been proposed, in any way the equivalent of "brahmin" (cf. Keith in *HOS* 31, p. 39, p. 276). The root-word *brahman*, whether masculine or neuter, is peculiarly Indian. The original vedic fire-priest was the *atharvan*, Iranian *āthravan*. Other sacrificial priests such as the *hotṛ* also had their Iranian counterparts—all except the brahmin, who appeared rather late on the scene. He implied the beginning of a new class division *within* each Aryan tribe. The tribal king always brought gifts for the sacrifice; towards the end of the Ṛgveda period, the gifts are first mentioned as a *bali* tax, special prerogative of the chief (*RV*. 10.173.6, *bali-hṛtaḥ*). This, the first of all regular internal taxes, remained thereafter in the steadily expanding list of the post-vedic period. In the Yajurveda (treated in the next chapter) which deals with regular settlements rather than the conquest of the land, we find four castes[7] fully developed within the tribe: *brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya, śūdra*. The fire-sacrifices became far too cumbrous[8] for any but the professional priesthood. The ostensible major purpose of sacrifice re-

mained success in warfare, both of which had become correspondingly heavier. A far more powerful secondary purpose appeared, namely repression of the inner struggle of new classes. The *vaiśya* (settler, husbandman) and the *śūdra* (helots), are to be exploited for the advantage of the ruling warrior caste, the *kṣatriya* with the brahmin priest's help. The struggle with the *vaiśya* was earlier, reflected in the Ṛgvedic strife between the collective Maruts and their chief, Indra. We are later told that these Maruts are the peasantry (*viś*) ; Indra eats them up as the king the peasants.[9] One of the major purposes of the sacrifice was to make the other three castes obedient to the *kṣatriya* rulers (*TS*. 2.5.10). The *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa*[10] says (*AB*. 7.29) "Like a *vaiśya* .... tributary to another, to be eaten by another, to be oppressed at will .... Like a *śūdra*,.... the servant of another, to be removed at will, to be slain at will". The two lower castes are to be enclosed, both on the outward and return ceremonial rounds at the sacrifice, between the warrior and the priest castes, to make them submissive (*ŚB*.[11] 6.4.4.13). The progressively more complicated *yajña* fire-sacrifice, where the principal sacrificial animals had long been, in order, man, horse, bull, ram, he-goat, developed into ceremonies lasting many days. The effect, and to some extent even the conscious purpose, (as the references to the lower castes prove,) was to control the new class structure that had developed within the tribe. Sometimes the associated internal conflicts were externalized in warfare.

It has been claimed that the Iranians also had a rudimentary caste system, on the authority of *Yasna* 19.17, which mentions four classes : the priest, the charioteer, the tiller, and the artisan. This has nothing to do with caste, for endogamy is nowhere mentioned ; moreover, all four classes seem equally honoured, as they accompany the righteous man throughout the entire course of his experience (or duty), as moral support. Greek writers marked Indian caste as unique, never comparing it with the Iranian classes — which were three in the primitive Avesta, the artisan being new. The Iranian artisan is not the *śūdra* of India. The Persians of this period knew slavery from their predecessors in the empire. The Indian

śūdra was impure, a substitute for the unfree class in other countries. The nearest equivalent to the brahmins as a caste would be the Magians in Iran. It is known from the narrative of Herodotus that they were one of six Perso-Median tribes ; Gaumāta the Magian passed himself off for a while as Cambyses (Kambujiya), occupying the throne. With his killing by Darius went a general slaughter of all Magians, annually celebrated as the Magophonia. Nevertheless, Magians survived as priests of the Persians, particularly in the western part of the empire ; the non-Magian eastern priests were called *āthravans*. Zoroaster continues to use the words *maguś* and *magopat* in an honorific sense, similar to, though not so high as the Ṛgvedic *brahman*. This provides an excellent parallel to the origin of the Indian brahmins.

4. 5. Most surviving Sanskrit literature has been the creation of brahmins or in their possession, or in some way stamped by brahminism. Other literature, like that of the Buddhists and Jains, is strongly coloured : first by the struggle against late vedic brahminism, later by brahmin penetration. The class adapted itself to various changes in the means and especially the relations of production, a good many of which can be discerned only through their ideological framework. Under the circumstances, the formation of the caste deserves some attention ; the successive changes it underwent must be considered in their proper setting.

There is good reason to believe that the first brahmins were a result of interaction between the Aryan priesthood, and the ritually superior priesthood of the Indus culture. There are innumerable *gotras* in seven main divisions of the brahmins, each of which must marry outside its own *gotra*, which thus corresponds to the Latin *gens*. The word *gotra* is good Sanskrit, its original meaning of cow-pen being the exclusive Ṛgvedic sense of the word. It is known that each particular *gotra* had its own mark for branding cattle, which were therefore held in common ; later, when the unit of common holding became the joint family, which still survives in many parts of India, the significance of *gotra* changed correspondingly to mean 'household' as well as 'clan'. It was the form of property which gave its unity and name to the human group

holding it in common.[12] Even when land became property, cattle still remained a measure of wealth positively correlated to the amount of land held. In theory, each of the seven larger groups or any sub-group thereof betokens common descent from a *ṛṣi* sage, whose name the *gotra* still bears. In effect, however, the actual number of these ancestral sages cannot be made seven by any system of counting ; there exist at least two distinct lists of the 'seven' of which the older seems to have little relation to the developed brahmin clan system which remains. It might be supposed that the 'seven' go back to the seven rivers and perhaps to the ancient Mesopotamian seven sages.

Evidence for non-Aryan brahmins is that some of them are called sons of their mothers, by name : Dīrghatamas, who came to grief at the hand of Traitana, is son of Mamatā, a *dāsī* ; the father is variously Uśij or Ucathya. Aryans by birth are, in the *RV.*, sons of their fathers. So, the legend is comprehensible that the blinded Dīrghatamas floated eastward down the river, to find honour among strange people, as Indus priests might have tried to do. The reproach 'son of a *dāsa* woman' was levelled against other vedic seers. Two of the prominent *gotra* founders, Agastya and Vasiṣṭha were born from jars ; the jar represents the womb ; in the case of Vasiṣṭha at least, the womb of some pre-Aryan mother-goddess. This Vasiṣṭha gives the full story of his birth in *RV.* 7.33 ; elsewhere in the Vasiṣṭha family book, we see that he BECAME[13] the priest of king Sudās, hence the chief priest of the Bharatas. Before him, a Viśvāmitra had been the main Bharata priest, as the third book of the *RV.* still proves. The story of the conflict between the two remains in all later tradition, while *RV.* 3.53.21-24 are supposed to be Viśvāmitra's curse against the Vasiṣṭhas which no Vasiṣṭha can read without dire consequences. In the same hymn we hear that fainting Viśvāmitra received the gift of the mysterious *sasarparī* from Jamadagni, which enabled him (according to the commentators) to hold out against Vasiṣṭha. Viśvāmitra seems to have been the one real indubitable Aryan among the clan-founder priests, for he is admitted to have been a *kṣatriya* of the Jahnu clan, owl (*kuśika*) totem, a member of the ruling

warrior class. The Jamadagnis (though they bear a good Aryan name, like the Vasiṣṭhas) are demonstrably late-comers into the vedic fold. They have no family book of their own, and are counted as a branch of the still later Bhṛgus, whom we have seen to be a tribe in the Ten-king war, against Sudās.

Other features of brahminism might also support the view of adoption from pre-Aryans. The goddess Uṣas had 21 secret names known only to her special priestly initiates. We have noted the survival and revival of Indus motifs in Tantrism, which might originate from fertility rites but is associated with brahmins from the earliest times. Though the first decipherable Indian alphabets found in epigraphs seem to be quite simple and perhaps of Semitic origin, like the Kharoṣṭhī, it is notable that under brahmin influence Indian writing became syllabic : a letter and a syllable is the same, as in Mesopotamia (and China). Some legendary kings had two names which cannot be derived in Sanskrit from each other. This might be explained by postulating original records in some script like the cuneiform where names written in one way are to be pronounced in some other ; *e.g.* the syllables *śir-pur-la* give a city name pronounced Lagaś ; *pa-te-si* is pronounced *ishakku*, the king-governor, and so on.

The long, rigid process of study under a chosen *guru* in the uncultivated forest served—as explained before—to preserve the immutability of the sacred books. This isolation could have given no information about city life, techniques, history, if it had been the practice from the very beginning. It is difficult to imagine voluminous erudition, myth, tradition of the most complicated sort emerging from this process—unless the brahmins had initially some literate and therefore urban background, which seems totally absent for vedic Aryans. Only the non-Aryans were the principal vedic city-dwellers. The brahmin clan-names retain a clear impress of tribal names, from the earliest stages down into historical times. Purukutsa is the combined name of two Aryan tribes ; a king of that name is praised by a Bharadvāja seer in *RV.* 6.20.10 ; it cannot be without significance that we still find a Purukutsa sub-gotra among Bharadvāja brahmin clan groups. Other tribal names like the Vikarṇas (defeated by Sudās) left

descendants in more than one clan. The Udumbaras are a post-vedic tribe whose coins are found (bearing the tree-mark which should represent their totem), but Udumbara brahmins are known both among Viśvāmitras and Kaśyapas. The Kaśyapas became more prominent in later brahminism, particularly in the Gangetic basin, though of little importance in the *RV*; they and the Kaṇvas were for a long time excluded as unfit for sacrificial fees, a highly embarrassing injunction which has to be explained away. In spite of the fact that *kaṇva* is a type of demon against whom the late Atharvāveda gives some exorcisms (*AV*. 2.25), the Kaṇva brahmins have a family book in the Ṛgveda, the eighth. Presumably some pre-Aryan Kaṇvas remained unabsorbed. The *Vālaśikha gotra* among Vasiṣṭhas is derived etymologically from the Varaśikhas destroyed by Indra at Hariyūpiyā.

This independence from rigid confinement within the bounds of a single tribe, ability to slip into any tribe, helped brahminism in later periods as well. We have seen Ṛgvedic seers accepting fees from both sides. The Vasiṣṭhas who cursed the Pūrus on behalf of the Bharatas praise them in *RV*. 7.96.2. By contrast, a kṣatriya is always designated as a *kṣatriya* of such and such a tribe. Adoption would mean (according to known patriarchal custom) that connections would be severed with the previous clan and family at least as far as inheritance and ritual are concerned. Among the oldest brahmins, we find plenty of examples to the contrary: Śunaḥśepa ('Dog-tail'; his two brothers have names that mean the same thing, so perhaps a split totem) was sold by his hungry father Ajīgarta for human sacrifice, rescued and adopted by Viśvāmitra, who changed his name to Devarāta. To this day, the Devarāta *gotra* cannot intermarry with either Viśvāmitras or Jamadagnis. There are many other clans of the type with double *gotra*; some are Vasiṣṭhas by day, Kaśyapas by night! All this makes sense only on the hypothesis that some people who had considered kinship in the maternal line adjusted themselves to a conquering patriarchal society.

The Ṛgvedic seer Kavaṣa Ailūṣa was accused of being *dāsyaḥ putra*, son of a Dāsa woman, and cast out by other

priests; the power of his hymn (*RV*. 10.30) induced the holy river Sarasvatī to follow him into the desert. His ancestor Kavaṣa was overthrown by Indra (for Sudās) in *RV*. 7.18.12, along with the Druhyus. Two other Ṛgvedic seers, sons of Kaṇva, the half-brothers Vatsa and Medhātithi had a similar quarrel, the former being called 'son of a Dāsa woman' by the latter; he underwent the firewalk ordeal to prove his unblemished descent. These reports are in the ancient brahmin tradition though later than the Ṛgveda. There would have been no reason to invent such tales only to explain them away; hence there must be some truth in such Dāsa origin for some brahmins at least. This would give them a unity independent of Aryan fathers and tribes. It might account for peculiar remnants of mother-right in the *RV*, such as a god with several mothers but no recorded father.

A brahmin member of an Aryan tribe would have had the same property rights as all others except the chief. From the earliest stage, however, we find that some of these priests bewail their grim poverty. Vāmadeva (*RV*. 4.19.13) laments: "In the utmost need cooked I the entrails of a dog; among the gods I found no protector; I beheld my wife in degradation; then the falcon (Indra) gave me the (right to) the sweet mead (at the tribal feast)". This is a *dānastuti* of Indra comparable to any other of later human chiefs. The seer of *RV*. 1-105, who saw the Great Bear and Cassiopeia from the bottom of a well into which he seems to have fallen during the night, says, "My (emaciated) ribs clash like co-wives; as hungry rats (gnaw) their own tails, so gnaw me many cares." *RV*. 10.109 was meant to ensure the return of a brahmin's wife forcibly abducted by a king. Still more pitiful is the simple prayer to Agni in *RV*. 8.102.19-21, where the brahmin humbly beseeches the fire-god to accept his sacrifice of worm-eaten firewood, as he has no cow, nor even an axe.

These hymns prove that the brahmin priest was sometimes an unsupported individual such as no proper member of any tribe could have been. He was often on the tribal fringe. With him begins the later reorganization into castes as soon as he managed to come to terms with the warrior

class. This implies a higher level of production, regular settlements, the inevitable decay of tribal organization with the rise of a new type of property.

Notes and references :

1. In addition to his other books cited, V. Gordon Childe's *The Aryans* (London 1926) contains much useful material, though some of the details need revision. For the beginning of the two waves at Khorezm, I am indebted to a long discussion with Professor Sergei Pavlovich Tolstov of the Ethnographical Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences. The actual 'Var of Yima' excavated by him may be dated in the first half of the first millennium B.C., but had unquestionably far older prototypes. For this and a general discussion of Iranian sources, see E. Herzfeld: *Zoroaster and his world* (Princeton, 1947).

2. For the Ṛgveda, the text published (with Sāyaṇa's commentary) by the Vaidik Samshodhana Mandal at Poona in four volumes (1933-46) has been used. To give it some useful meaning needs the cautious use of a good translation, in this case K. F. Geldner's in the Harvard Oriental Series, vols. 33-35 (Cambridge, Mass. 1951). H. Grassmann's *Woerterbuch* of the Ṛgveda is now available in a third reprinting, and indispensable as an index though the meanings given by him may often be contested. A. A. Macdonell and A. B. Keith's *Vedic Index* (2 vol., London 1912) needs considerable revision in the light of archaeology, but may be used for locating references. For the Avesta, I have used J. Darmsteter's translation (*SBE.* vols. 4, 23; L. H. Mills, *SBE*, 31 (for the *Yasna*). The Zoroastrian reform turned most of the Aryan gods into demons (Avestan *daeva*), while retaining Agni and the Soma drink.

3. A. B. Keith: *Religion & philosophy of the vedas* (HOS 31-2 1925) gives the earlier conclusions about the vedas, with counter-arguments destroying them. The astronomical datings rest upon fantastic interpretations of the text. The latest clue (D. E. McCown, *JAOS.* 74.178 ff.) if Meluḫḫa be identified with the Indus valley, would put the decline at about 1750 B.C. (W. F. Albright in *BASOR.* 139.16).

4. *The origin of brahmin gotras* (*JBBRAS.* 26, 1950, pp. 21-80). The three-headed demon appears in Irish myth and many others, to end as one of the lesser giants killed by Jack the giant-killer.

5. The standard reference is *ZDMG.* 76, 1922, pp. 174-269, being E. Forrer's classical report. See also P. E. Dumont, *JAOS.* 67, 1947, pp. 251-253.

6. These myths gain added significance from Indra's striking off friendlier heads: once that of the non-Aryan Viṣṇu; again of his own fire-priest Dadhyañc Ātharvaṇa. The latter had thoughtfully been fitted with a horse's head by the twin Nāsatyas, who simply put back his original head after the contretemps. The horse's head so cut off was thrown into a mere called Saryaṇāvat, whence it rises periodically to

prophesy. This is reminiscent of the horse's head found in Danish excavations of what had been a small pond, just as the find of unbroken horse's skeletons in Danish oak-lined pits are related to the Indian horse-sacrifice with its *ūbadhya-gohaka* pit wherein the entrails and carefully disjointed bones were to be deposited, insulated from contact with the earth by a grass lining. The horse being an Aryan beast, the later legends cannot be easily related to decapitated non-Aryan demons.

7. The sole Ṛgvedic reference to the four later castes: brahmin, kṣatriya, vaiśya, Śūdra is in 10.90, itself a late addition. The castes were there engendered from the sacrifice of a primordial man (*puruṣa*) by the ancient Sādhya gods, who seem to be pre-Aryan, being very rarely mentioned. The hymn obviously creates religious authority for a social state that had none except force and usage.

8. The full details of Yajurvedic horse-sacrifice have been confirmed by the discovery of inscribed bricks with which the sacrificial altars were built. The actual sites found near Hardwār date just about the beginning of the Christian era, but the confirmation is valuable nevertheless.

9. In *RV*. 1.65.7, Agni is described as eating up the forests as a king the *ibhyas*. The word *ibhya* was taken by Geldner to mean vassals rich enough to maintain elephants. Such a feudal order is certainly not confirmed by the Ṛgveda. In the fifth Asokan rock edict, *ibhya* occurs as antithetical to brahmin, hence a very low caste; the same sense of low boors is implied by the *Ambaṭṭhasutta*, (*Dīgha-nikāya* 3), and by the Chāndogya Upaniṣad 1.10. 1-2 with its story of the famished brahmin Uṣasti Cākrāyaṇa. The Ṛgvedic king then devoured only people outside the tribe, whether by looting rich Dāsas or oppressing poor autochthones of the elephant totem who are later known as the lowly elephant drivers.

10. For this exegetical work appended to the Ṛgveda, the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* (the translation of A. B. Keith, *HOS*. 25, 1920) has been used; the particular chapter of the *Brāhmaṇa* is known to be a late addition, so that the developments cannot be Ṛgvedic.

11. For the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*, (exegesis to Yajurvedic ritual) Eggeling's translation *SBE*. vols. 12, 26, 41, 43, 44 (Oxford 1882-1900) is recommended, for its fine index.

12. In addition to the reference in note 4, the reader might find my essay review *Brahmin Clans* (*JAOS*. 73, 1953, pp. 202-208) of some interest. The best description of the gotra system as accepted by modern brahmins is in J. Brough: *The early brahmanical system of gotra and pravara* (Cambridge, 1953); Brough's correction in *JAOS*. 74, 1955, pp. 263-266 is justified in that I mistook the *Matsya-purāṇa* account as the prototype of *gotra lists* now extant.

13. My own *gotra* being Vasiṣṭha, there is no question of prejudice against this upstart ancestor. The name, though Aryan, means "most

excellent ", hence looks assumed. Each clan retained their distinctive hair-dressing in later times. The Bhṛgus were shave-pates, Gotamas and Bharadvājas had five hair-crests, Atreyas three hair-twists, Vasiṣṭhas a single twist to the right. The Vasiṣṭha type of hair-braid is not discernible on Indus seals; but the Egyptian statue of Khonshu has such hair-dressing. Even more clearly a solitary figure (a priest?) in an Egyptian relief illustrating a group of Hittite prisoners (Gurney, *The Hittites*, plate 2, *bis*), fits the Vasiṣṭha description *dakṣiṇatas-kapardaḥ*.

CHAPTER V

THE ARYAN EXPANSION

LACK of relevant archaeology, absence of chronological data, unavailability of records other than ritual or myth, render the classical historian's task almost hopeless for the period under consideration. Nevertheless, certain basic facts are clear. This was the stage of relatively fixed settlements which spread to the east of the Indus valley. The plough steadily became more important, relatively to cattle herds, for the supply of food. A calendar (whose importance will be brought out later) first developed. A class structure emerged as the four "original" castes (section 4.4) within the new Aryan tribes; this was to give formal direction to later social accretions. This differentiation within the tribe paved the way to a class-society wider than the tribe, where the priest and warrior castes united to repress and exploit the Aryan peasant (*vaiśya*) and non-Aryan helot (*śūdra*). But this was not a slave-society for that very reason. Tribal influence remained great, warfare between tribal kingdoms the prime ideal. The forms of settlement and property had to change, which led to a new type of marriage with the older group-marriage reflected only in the polygamy of a few and perhaps in a rudimentary

levirate. The caste tension between priest and king (expressed by the Tvāṣṭra legend) also belongs to this period. Unfortunately, none of these facts can be elicited without tedious discussion of badly analysed sources. The reader who is dissatisfied with my treatment has only to compare it to any other standard discussion based upon documentation rather than pure conjecture. The most that could be expected here is a sketch of the possibilities for further work.

5.1. Because the Aryans were intruders who brought their own language into the country, the region of Aryan expansion is sometimes taken as the present domain covered by the Indo-Aryan group of languages, from Bengali, Hindi, Punjabi in the north, Rājasthāni, Gujarāti and Marāṭhī in the west. This leaves a vast peninsular area where Dravidian languages are spoken by the greater part of the population : Tamil, Telugu, Malayālam, Kanarese, Tuḷu, etc. The residue contains a small population speaking tribal languages which are grouped together as 'Austric' from some resemblance to the primitive Australian speech : Muṇḍāri, Oraon, and the like.[1] The demographic interpretation of this philological distribution is that the Aryans pushed into the south a previous Dravidian population, which had in turn pushed into the hills a primitive 'Austric' group. In proof, we are offered the survival of the Brahui language in Afghanistan, a Dravidian linguistic island in the Aryan medium. Bengali, with the most highly Sanskritized vocabulary of living tongues, has nevertheless a structure that gives some philologists the impression of "a Dravidian language spoken with Aryan words". Austric elements are in turn faintly traced within Dravidian languages. A fanciful conjecture is that the obscure *tābuvan* in *AV*. 5.13.10 is the South Sea Islanders' *tabu*, hence Austric ; this may be disposed of by pointing to the—equally meaningless—variant *tāvucam* in some texts, and the fact that the *AV* gives an exorcism against snake-poison without any implication of *tabu*. To the aid of philology comes anthropometry, where skull-forms and nose-length are measured to reach the conclusion that there are three main types[2] in the country : the fair, long-headed Aryan, the dark Dravidian, and the broad-nosed tribal savage. Such work conceals its own futility from the uninitiated by an imposing mass of tables. The nasal in-

dex, to judge from such published work, is not stable over so short a period as fifty years. Nothing is known of its relation to heredity, which must be proved before any use can be made of such measurements for separation of ethnic groups. Changes in diet, living habits, selection over a long period by famine and epidemic, all have their effects which have been totally ignored. On the other hand, most anthropometrists tend to select their individuals to suit their own prejudices. When it is pointed out that the millions of U.P. are presented by about a thousand people measured, or that such conglomerate, inhomogeneous groups as " Telugu Brahmins " by fifty specimens from over a million people, the highly doubtful nature of the conclusions becomes evident.

The whole of such anthropometrical research may be and has been contested step by step, but that would take us too long here. Our main objection to this procedure is that it takes no cognizance whatever of changed physical measurements, birth-rates and population ratios due to superior methods of food production. For that matter, these affect language too, though indirectly. The 'displacement' of tribal people implies that they were formerly settled where the main settlements now happen to be. This is highly improbable, for the most productive lands today either need heavy irrigation or were dense jungle fit only for a certain amount of hunting in the driest seasons. The best place for tribal settlements is just about where they still survive, namely the hills of Central India, the Peninsula, Assam, and the lower Himālayas. Slash-and-burn cultivation was, and still is possible here, as also a certain amount of cattle-grazing, both supplementary to hunting or to exchange with tribes that lived by hunting. There is no question of people being 'driven back' from today's fertile plains except perhaps in extremely small numbers. There is no evidence whatever that post-Ṛgvedic Aryans found, let alone displaced, a large autochthonous population, except in the Indus valley.

As soon as people take to regular food production from a previous irregular food-gathering mode, they breed more rapidly. The improved food supply means that more children are born, more survive to maturity, more people reach old age. "Aryan"

at the period under discussion means war-like tribal people who lived by cattle-breeding supplemented by plough-cultivation. The Aryans were at the crucial stage where soon the plough would produce much more than cattle. So, WHAT SPREAD WAS A NEW WAY OF LIVING. It does not necessarily follow that a corresponding physical migration also took place. A few people of mixed origin could settle in clearings made within the forest and multiply so much more than the previous food-gatherers as to become the main population of the region. The height, nasal index, and even complexion often change with living habits and steadier, ampler food supply. As I see it, a few Aryans did migrate in each case, but the new colonies were formed of Aryans and non-Aryans mixed at the difficult initial settlement, developing into an exclusive 'Aryan' tribe later on. The language would have to be Aryan because the new tools and social relations differed fundamentally from anything visualized by the aborigines and by their languages. The jump was far greater than in modern times from the pre-bourgeois to the bourgeois mode introduced by the British. The change need not have been voluntary, nor even a conscious step. Sudden access of greater trade, exchange of new produce, the increased need for interchange of vastly more complicated ideas between a suddenly augmented number of people divided into social groups that did not exist before, and most of all a new ritual with its strange *mantra* formulae to be chanted—all this would be far beyond a primitive tribal language, though some could undoubtedly have developed them, given ample time for slow adaptation. The Dravidians, excluding a probably migratory island like the Brahui, seem to me to have been groups whose members learned the new technique through trade contacts; little immigration took place so that they managed to develop their own language during acculturation. Where the aborigines stubbornly failed to become food-producers—because of sloth, mistrust, or the stultifying effect of certain types of primitive ritual—or later immigrants lapsed into food-gathering, the population remains tribal. The 'Austric' language was then also retained, whatever that may mean when common features are sought of all the Indian tribal languages from

Assam down to the Nilgiris. The linguistic problem has not been studied from this point of view. Marr's Japhetic theory[1] did start by taking into account such phenomena as totems, only to fall into a set of idealistic categories which forced the study of Caucasian dialects and languages into curious moulds, without explaining basic features in other countries. To this day, one cannot say just what constitutes the 'structure', say, of Muṇḍāri, nor how one is to remove from it the undoubted influence of surrounding advanced languages. The same probelm becomes much stronger for the European languages that developed last out of a tribal stage, namely Basque and the Finno-Ugrian group consisting of Finnish and Hungarian—for which a common grammar (in the sense of Meillet's Aryan grammar) still remains an impossibility. Primitive languages must also change with major revolutions in the means of production; the type of change would depend upon the historical circumstances, as well as the historical background.

For our purpose, therefore, the essential is that plough agriculture greatly increased the food supply, and made it more regular. This meant not only a far greater population, but one that lived together in greater units. For example, the Veddah hunters generally roam about in groups of half a dozen. Moreover, the plough means that a settlement is fixed, permanent, whereas tribal hunting and grazing compelled the food-gatherers to move about, as did slash-and-burn cultivation. Thus, both quantity and quality changed together. Not only were there many more people, but they were an entirely different kind of people, with different social needs—hence the need for a new language.

5.2. The first period of Aryan transition in India from pastoral-raider to agrarian food-producing economy is represented by sources which lack archaeological support or chronological utility, being mostly later ritual, legend, myth, fable or sermons. Many of them have been readjusted by a brahmin class which had begun to grow further and further away from the producers, rewriting tradition to prove their own importance, or to claim special caste-class privileges. A given passage in the sacred books may represent a real event

if it runs counter to brahmin claims of superiority or is so embarrassing that it has to be explained away. Nevertheless, it is difficult or impossible to reconstruct the complete social framework without which such passages cannot be fully evaluated.

The documents of the post-Ṛgvedic period fall into three major groups. The first is the later vedic literature of which the Sāmaveda may be discarded immediately, for its words are almost entirely from the Ṛgveda with trifling adjustments for the purpose of musical chanting at the fire-sacrifice. The Yajurveda has come down to us in several recensions, the two main types being the Black, of which we may take the *Taittirīya saṃhitā* (*TS*) as the most useful text, containing both ritual formula and comment. The White Yajurveda (*Vājasaneyī saṃhitā*) separates ritual from exegesis, the ritual being about the same ; the explanatory portion, the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (*ŚB*) is the most important work of the type that has been handed down to us. In addition to these there are a number of exegetical works on the Ṛgveda. The whole group carries us into the Upaniṣadic period, the sequence being Veda, Brāhmaṇa, Āraṇyaka, Upaniṣad, in a continuous development that pays as little attention as possible to extraneous traditions, which enter surreptitiously nevertheless. The books run from ritual chant to ritual prescriptions, to ritual myth, to mysticism transcending ritual, hence cover a steadily advancing type of productive basis. To these must be added the fourth veda, the *Atharva-veda* (*AV*) which was not admitted to the level of the earlier three even as late as the Upaniṣads. The ritual here is black and white magic on a much smaller scale than the others ; one might say *genre* ritual.

The two epics *Mahābhārata* (*Mbh.*) and *Rāmāyaṇa* are difficult to fit anywhere into the closed sequence forming our second group of sources. They are 'post-vedic', containing a historical germ to be magnified or decried according to the writer's predilections. The *Mbh.* narrates the events of a great fratricidal war fought near Delhi for an empire that stretched from Taxila to Bengal and deep into the south. Such an empire was never a possibility before the 4th century B.C. and the quite historical Mauryans. With the *Mbh.* goes the

whole complex of the *purāṇas*, which contain king-lists in the shape of prophecies, rewritten again and again almost to the present day. Could these *purāṇas* be critically edited, which means editing about a dozen of them simultaneously with a synoptic critical apparatus, it would be possible to BEGIN the work of winnowing the minute historical grains from a vast amount of mythical chaff. The *Mbh.* was similarly inflated, but a critical edition now helps restore a good approximation to a nucleus, which dates to between the 2nd century B.C. and the 2nd century A.D. This archetype, however, rests upon a completely lost older *Bhārata* of 24,000 stanzas or less which in turn goes back to freely improvised bardic lays. The *Rāmāyaṇa* (only now being critically edited) narrates of the abduction and recovery of Sītā, wife of an exiled king of Ayodhyā (Fyzābād). The villain is (a ten-headed demon) Rāvaṇa, king of Lāṅkā (equated to Ceylon) certainly unknown to the Aryans of our period. Finally, we have a great deal of Buddhist canonical literature in the simpler Pāli language, which was first written down in Bihār about the time of Asoka, say two and a half centuries after the events narrated, and about which grew up a whole series of tales in the nature of commentaries, the *Jātakas* being the most informative. Pāli literature brings us into verifiable history, for archaeology supports the record. The Jain *sūtras* must be included therewith though in their present state they are later as well as less important.

Even the negative study of such material is useful, first to remove any doubts of possible historicity, and secondly to make available the patches which may be clarified by archaeological work in future. The Yajurvedic ritual has such support (*IAR.* 1954. pp. 10-11, and earlier reports). Ornaments described or mentioned in the *Mbh.* can be equated to some of those sculptured in monuments of the Gupta period. The process of collation lies in the future and will be analogous to the recovery of information from Homer and from the Bible by excavations. The purely literary-critical study reveals one extraordinary feature, namely that even the latest of the works may be the first to contain a very ancient tradition not recorded earlier, except sometimes by passing mention.

A good example is of the flood legend, first recorded in *ŚB.* 1.8.1.1-6. The sage Manu was saved by a great Fish, which told him to prepare an ark ; instead of Ararat, the ark was naturally hitched to a peak of the Himālayas when the rest of the world was flooded out. This Fish later instructed Manu in the scriptures and became the first incarnation of Viṣṇu in the *Mbh.-Purāṇa* complex. It is the first of three accepted flood-incarnations, the other two being the Tortoise, and the Boar. The last occurs in *ŚB.* (14.1.211) as a creator though not an incarnation. The primeval Tortoise was the support for the mountain used as churning-stick when the gods and the demons churned the ocean in *Mbh.* 1.16.10 *ff.* later made into an incarnation of Viṣṇu. The tortoise is of totemic importance, as it has to be built into the sacrificial altar (*ŚB.* 7.5.1.5-7, for its cosmic import) though not a sacrificial animal. It is etymologically related to the Kaśyapa *gotra* of the brahmins, which is notorious for being able from early days to absorb (as the name Mātaṅga Kassapa shows) aborigines who wanted to become brahmins, and as the *gotra* of all those without a clan-name, or unable to remember their clan-name, or born of mating against exogamic *gotra* rules. The Kaśyapas were negligible in the Ṛgveda, of growing importance in the traditions above, while they took the lead in the early Kosala-Magadhan Buddhist order. The tortoise is specifically included in the list of five five-nailed animals which may be eaten without breaking a *tabu.* This shows that it was eaten by brahmins, apparently for totemic rites, since it is nowhere prescribed as an article of diet, nor known to have been specially popular as staple or delicacy. The fish incarnation goes back to Sumeria, perhaps through the Indus culture ; a goat-fish is the symbol of Ea, who is also Enki, and sleeps in a chamber within the waters just as Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa sleeps upon them. The very name Nārāyaṇa may be of non-Aryan derivation, for *nārā* is explained as 'the waters'. The word is probably borrowed by Sanskrit and may be Dravidian, or even Assyrian.

We have already noted a report of Babylon (*babiruś* = *bāveru*) in the *Jātakas*, though the kingdom and the name had vanished before the *Jātaka* was written. It follows that such

study can be highly informative, provided the materialist basis is not obscured by endless conjectures and distortion of the texts.

5.3. The *TS* brings out another feature of brahmin tradition : that it did not represent all Aryans, but only some Aryan groups. The *RV* was put together from clan books combined with certain additions, then transmitted to us in a Śākala recension which was generally accepted. In preserving the Yajurveda, several other widely separated tribal groups participated. Names like Kaṭha connected with the tradition are confirmed by Greek sources as Indian tribal names at the time of Alexander. The *TS* is only one of such recensions ; though important differences had not become evident, it is clear that the Aryan tribes had begun to diverge. This is not a book of the Pūrus, for example, who continued in the Punjab, nor of any of the original Five Tribes, whoever they were. Newer tribal names now appeared among the Aryans simultaneously with the occupation of new territory. These names can hardly be due to further invasions from outside, as the continuity from Ṛgvedic times within the Punjab shows us. The new tribes must have been internal developments, from a few migrants presumably combined with non-Aryan autochthones, a process which was working even at the time of the Ṛgveda. The name of the *TS* derives from *Tittiri*, a partridge *gotra* totem, all the more interesting because the book itself tells us (*TS*. 2.5.1) that one of the heads struck off from three-headed Tvāṣṭra by Indra became a *tittiri* bird. The *tittiri* country produced fine horses according to *Mbh*. 6.86.4. The book is concerned with enormous sacrificial developments, shown by the long list of animals (*TS*. 5.5.11-2) to be killed along with the sacrificial horse. In *TS*. 1.8.2-7, there is brief mention of the few popular sacrifices for the four months of the rains ; the whole book is concerned with the chieftain's ritual, including consecration. The term *gṛhapati* = householder does occur, with a special *gārhapatya* fire. In the *TS* it cannot refer to a small householder for whom the onerous sacrifices described would be impossible, hence must indicate the head of a clan or large household of some sort which might include a dozen or more families in the modern

sense. Thus *TS*. 2.2.1 : " He should make an offering to Indra and Agni on eleven potsherds who has a dispute about a field or with his neighbours ", has to be interpreted in the context not as evidence for the private ownership of land, but for disputes beginning to arise between neighbouring groups which could not be settled within the framework of a single tribe, by meeting in assembly, hence must have been between different tribal units on adjacent territory. The 'he' would mean chief of the unit, whatever its size may have been. Thereafter, large households remained the norm among the upper classes, down to feudal times and later. The word *gotra*, which denoted " clan " also came to mean " family ", a parallel development.

Some of the *TS* makes strange reading after the *RV*. For example *TS*. 7.4.7 refers to the slaying of Vasiṣṭha's son by the sons of that very Sudās of *RV*. 7.18 who won the ten-king battle with the help of Vasiṣṭha's prayers. *AV*. 5.18., 5.19 are imprecations against the wretched kṣatriya who would eat the cow of the brahmin, interspersed with cajolery : " Do not, O prince, (eat the cow) of the brahmin ; sapless, unfit to be eaten is that cow " (*AV*. 5.18.3). In the same tone is the Paraśurāma legend, of a Bhṛguid champion who wiped the kṣatriyas off the earth no less than twenty-one times. The excessive and self-contradictory annihilation is clearly psychological overcompensation for brahmin helplessness in the face of kṣatriya dominance. Paraśurāma is promoted in the Bhṛgu-inflated *Mbh*. to the status of a *Viṣṇu* incarnation. The tension between priest and chief is an undercurrent in vedic literature thereafter, though both combined against the other two castes. The four-caste class structure continued. It is a remarkable feature that there is nothing whatever in these rituals about fighting against non-Aryan enemies such as the Paṇis, Dasyus, or the like. That is, new non-Aryan groups of enemies did not immediately appear in this settlement period. However, new popular rites and beliefs are shown in passing. According to *TS*. 7.5.10, slave (*dāsī*) girls were to dance about the Mārjālīya sacrificial fire with water-pots on their heads, singing. This cannot be an Aryan ritual at all ; the water-pot gained brahmin sanctity only at a late stage. *TS*. 3.2.6

tells us : " If a black bird touch the speckled butter (at the sacrifice) his slaves would be likely to die ; if a dog touch it, his four-footed cattle would be likely to die ; if it were to be spilt, the sacrificer would be likely to die". Thus the existence of human cattle may be inferred as a minor detail. What kind of bondage existed here is not said though the equivalent, helotage, can otherwise be shown. More important is the list of crops : rice, barley, beans, sesame, kidney beans, vetches, wheat, lentils, millet, *Panicum miliaceum*, *Panicum frumentaceum*, and wild rice (*TS.* 4.7.4), for whose abundance the sacrificer also prays. The metals follow immediately (*TS.* 4.7. 5) : gold, bronze, lead, tin, iron, copper ; most of these must have been obtained by trade from a distance ; neither the Indus valley nor that of the Ganges produce any. " What grows on ploughed land, what grows on unploughed land " are both of importance. We are well into the period of settlements, though not yet of cities. The new-moon and full-moon sacrifices as well as the list of 27 *nakṣatra* constellations shows us that the Indian calendar with lunar months had already been established ; whether solar adjustments were made is not clear, but they could not long have been delayed, as the crops depend upon such adjustment being made in time to plough in advance of the seasonal rains.

The existence of regular trade is indirectly vouched for by the treatment of gold. We read again and again that " gold is immortality" (*TS.* 5.2.7 &c.) which has ritual psychologic explanations. The gold, however, was doled out to the priest according to *TS.* 2.3.2 in units of four *kṛṣṇalās* each from a piece of 100 *kṛṣṇalās* weight. The *kṛṣṇalā* or *guñja* is a seed of the *Abrus precatorius*, red with black spot, still used by Indian goldsmiths to make up small weights. The significant feature of this is that the earliest silver coins known in India are of the 32-*kṛṣṇalā* standard, amounting to almost exactly 54 grains ; moreover, this standard goes back to weights of class 'D' found at Mohenjo-dāro and Harappā. So, the *TS* does give us some real information in spite of its preoccupation with the sacrifice. The main sacrifice is that of the horse, which was seen developing in *RV.* 1.162 ; but the beast was no longer simply killed and cooked. The principal queen had

to couple with the dead beast to the accompaniment of an obscene discourse, in what is clearly a fertility rite. It would seem that the horse was a substitute for a human being (perhaps the chief himself) that had once been sacrificed. Human victims were also to be sacrificed in accompaniment, along with many other creatures. The importance of the horse in Aryan warfare cannot explain the augmented sacrifice. New elements were added as necessary. For example, the four sacred trees (Aśvattha, Nyagrodha, Plakṣa, Udumbara, still worshipped today) appear for the first time as sacred in *AB.* 8.16, and 7.32. Mother-goddesses in triads,[4] as also the Apsarasas are to be propitiated, which points once again to increasing contact with non-Aryans who had preserved matriarchal usage. Founders of several lines of purāṇic king-lists were sons of such Apsarasas as Ghṛtācī, Alambuṣā. The most famous, Bharata, was a son of Śakuntalā, herself daughter of the Apsaras Menakā. This son Bharata was then made the eponymous progenitor of the Bharata tribe, which is seen in the *RV.* without any such fictitious ancestor. The Yajurvedic horse-sacrifice developed a remarkable new variant where the horse was freed at the royal consecration, allowed to wander where he liked for a fixed period, often a whole year, during which any rival king who opposed the horse's passage would have to be defeated. The actual sacrifice came at the end of the year, after all challengers had been fought off, sovereignty having thus been established. These developed horse-sacrifices became a main feature of the epic period, particularly the *Mbh.* With the *TS* and the *Brāhmaṇa* literature, however, various types of consecration (*AB.* 8.14) developed, each intended to free the chief in some way from tribal control. The tribal *sabhā* assembly is not mentioned at all, though we know that it continued to function. The development of brahminism meant the development of a class structure within the tribe with absolute kingship over the tribe. This could have been suspected by the violence Indra exercised against gods and fire-priests even in the Ṛgveda, which contains the designations : paramount ruler (*samrāṭ*), autocrat (*svarāt*) ; precisely terms that appear later as kingship with different types of consecration.

5.4. The *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* (*SB*. 1.4.1.14-17) describes the Aryan method of land-clearing :

(14) "Māthava, the Videgha, was at that time on the (river) Sarasvatī. He (the sacred fire, Agni) thence went burning along this earth towards the east ; and Gotama Rahūgaṇa (the priest) and Videgha Māthava (the king) followed after him as he was burning along. He burnt over (dried up) all these rivers. Now that (river) which is called Sadānīrā ('always with water') flows from the northern (Himālaya) mountain : that one he did not burn over. That one the brahmins did not cross in former times, thinking, 'it has not been burnt over by Agni Vaiśvānara'. (15) Nowadays, however, there are many brahmins to the east of it. At that time it (the land east of the Sadānīrā) was very uncultivated, very marshy, because it had not been tasted by Agni Vaiśvānara. (16) Nowadays, however, it is very cultivated, for the brahmins have caused (Agni) to taste it through sacrifices. Even in late summer that (river), as it were, rages along : so cold is it, not having been burnt over by Agni Vaiśvānara. (17) Māthava the Videgha, then said (to Agni), 'Where am I to abide?' 'To the east of this (river) be thy abode', said he. Even now this (river) forms the boundary of the Kosalas and Videhas ; for these are the Māthavas (or descendants of Māthava)."

The Aryans, as they advanced eastwards, burnt over the forest along the Himālayan foothills. The deforested land dried up. Progress was retarded for a time by a glacier-fed river, but they later settled to the east, by the same method of land-clearing. This method is confirmed by various adjectives for Agni in the *RV* : The swallower of forests, the axe, he who leaves a black furrow. The river-name was later identified with the Karatoyā which survives as the modern Kurrāttee in Bengal ; but it has obviously been displaced eastwards. The original Karatoyā must have been somewhere about the Gaṇḍak.[5] It is to be noted that there was no question of clearing the main land in the U.P., between the Himālayas and the Ganges.

The method of land-clearing was not the principal one for bringing land under cultivation in historical times, but it is clearly set forth in the epic. *Mbh*. 1.214-225 (*Khāṇḍava-dāha-parva*) describes land-burning in the grand Aryan manner. At the request of the jaded fire-god himself, who had developed indigestion from too much butter swallowed at pre-

vious sacrifies, so was unable to consume the Khāṇḍava forest (on the Jumna river, not far from Delhi), Kṛṣṇa and the Pāṇḍavas set out to burn that forest down to restore Agni's vitality. The forest had been under Indra's protection and sheltered, among others, the great Cobra Takṣaka. Having set it afire on all sides, the heroes shot down all living creatures that tried to run away or fight their way out. Only six escaped the holocaust alive : Aśvasena, Maya (an Asura, brother to Namuci killed by Indra, a clever architect who later built the assembly-hall where the Pāṇḍavas gambled away their kingdom) and four *sāṁga* birds. Everything else, even the fishes in the water, had been consumed by fire or slaughtered by the sacrificers. The Nāga Takṣaka was saved by the accident of having been away at the time.

This brings us to geographical considerations. The Videhas and Kosalas survived into historic times in modern Bihar and U.P. They have deep connections with the epics, probably because the epics were rewritten to please chieftains who claimed descent (with brahmin help) from ancestors whose respectability had to be guaranteed by suitably rewritten epic tradition. Vedic genealogies had been closed a long time earlier, the original vedic tribes having vanished or being regarded as barbarians by newer brahmins. Rāma's mother was a princess of Kosala, though the later Kosala moved south to the modern Mahānadī, while the northern Kosala was centered in Buddhist times about the modern Goṇḍā and Bahraich districts of U.P., extending thence as a kingdom from the Himālaya to the Ganges. The abducted heroine Sītā was daughter of Janaka, king of Videha, who turned her up while ploughing the soil ; *sītā* means 'plough-furrow'. The one group that occurs in almost all sources is the Kurus. Their existence in Ṛgvedic days has to be inferred from the name Kuruśravaṇa ('glory of the Kurus') in *RV*. 10.32.9 and 10. 33.4. That king was son of Mitrātithi, descendant of a king Trasadasyu, and had a son Upamaśravas. The seer was none other than Kavaṣa Ailūṣa, once accused of being son of a Dāsa woman, author also of the famous and touching gambler's hymn *RV*. 10.34. He complains that his ribs clashed together (from hunger) like co-wives, reminding Upmaśravas, "Give heed,

O son (of Kuruśravaṇa) Upamaśravas, grandson of Mitrātithi ; I am thy father's bard !".

The Kurus seem to have been settled in the Delhi-Meerut region on the Jumna, and to have been allied with the Pañcālas (perhaps 'five-eels'). The Kuru territory, with a petty king, survived to the days of the Buddha. The trading center (*nigama*) *Kammāsa-damma* of the Kurus in the Kuru country was visited by the Buddha himself according to *DN*. 15, *DN*. 22. It occurs again in *MN*. 10, *MN*. 106. In *MN*. 82, Buddha's disciple Raṭṭha-pāla (Rāṣṭra-pāla), son of the leading head-man of local families, lived and was converted by the Buddha at Thulla-koṭṭhita (in the Kuru country) which contained a Kuru royal park named Migācīra.

A northern branch of the Kurus, the Uttara-kurus, retained a legendary reputation, supposedly living near Mount Meru in a paradise on earth, where all men were born kind, lived a pure life ; where no land was brought under the plough, men lived on wild rice from untilled soil, and did not ride chariots. The same Uttara-kurus are mentioned in *AB*. 8.14, as having a special consecration for their kings, in their land beyond the Himālaya ; in *AB*. 8.23, their utopia appears as a place of the gods unconquerable by any mortal. The distance from legend or myth to reality, never very great in India, was small at the period and for the sources. When compared with other paradisaic legends the grain of fact seems to be the tradition of a free, happy, peaceful, tribal life with neither agriculture nor aggression.

5.5. Among names common to several of our sources, that of Ikṣvāku (an obscure chief in *RV*. 10.60.4) occurs as founder of the Kosalan line of kings. The derivation is from *ikṣu* = sugar-cane (first mention, *AV*. 1.34.5 ; also a kind of gourd), obviously totemic, presumably pre-Aryan. The word *śarkarā* for sugar which travelled all over the world from India, has not a Sanskrit appearance. Rāma is one of Ikṣvāku's descendants, though the hero's father Daśaratha has a name that compares with the Mitannian Tuzratta. In the same line of descent, (cf. *Maitrī Upaniṣad* 1.2) is Bṛhadratha (= of the great chariot) which perhaps represents more than one chief-

tain.[6] At the time of the *Mbh.* there ruled at Rājgīr, the old capital of Bihār, the son of Bṛhadratha, born of two sisters who had eaten the two halves of a magic fruit. This son Jarāsaṃdha (= joined by Jarā) was consequently born in two halves, both thrown away ; the halves were then fitted together by a demoness called Jarā to give a viable child and to explain the name (*Mbh.* 2.16.31-40). He was ripped apart again by Bhīma, after having driven Kṛṣṇa and the Yadus out of Mathurā. Archaeology may tell us whether a historical figure is meant here. Rājgīr is still fortified with cyclopean walls which at the latest date from the time of Ajātaśatru, who is reported (*MN.* 108) as fortifying, or repairing the old fortifications of Rājgīr just after Buddha's death, say about 480 B.C. If these massive walls (never properly explored) should turn out to be older, then Jarāsaṃdha should be regarded as the first of Magadhan chiefs who tried to raid territory to the west. The geography is uncertain. The hero Kṛṣṇa, recognized by Greeks as Herakles for having subdued a many-headed snake in the Jumna and for having killed opposing pancratiasts, was supposed to have left Mathurā with his people for Dvārakā, now in Kathiawar. Actually, the legend reports a westward march of the Yadus (*Mbh.* 2.13.49, 65) from Mathurā, while the route from Mathurā to Dvārakā lies southwards through a desert. This part of the Kṛṣṇa legend could be brought to earth by digging at Dvārakā, but also digging at Darwāz in Afghanistan, whose name means the same thing and which is the more probable destination of refugees from Mathurā who would retrace the old Aryan route of immigration in an opposite direction. The *Mbh.* reports a Goratha[7] mountain which is actually the name found in Brāhmī characters on a hill near Rājgīr, so that some archaeological work is justified in this case at least.

After the Kurus were "annihilated" in the great war at Kurukṣetra (near Delhi), and the Pāṇḍavas saw their end approaching, the heir Parikṣit was enthroned at Takṣaśilā (Taxila). Just why he had to be sent so far away is not clear, nor how the Kurus survived till the age of the Buddha. Parikṣit becomes famous in brahmin tradition for his sacrifices and his generosity to sacrificial priests.

"Listen ye to the high praise of the king who rules over all people, the god who is above mortals, of Vaiśvānara Parikṣit. 'Parikṣit has secured for us a secure dwelling, when he, the most excellent one, went to his seat.' (Thus) the husband in Kuru-land, when he founds his household, converses with his wife. 'What may I bring to thee, curds, stirred drink, or liquor?' (Thus) the wife asks her husband in the kingdom of king Parikṣit. Like light the ripe barley runs over beyond the mouth (of the vessels). The people thrive merrily in the kingdom of king Parikṣit." (*AV*.20.127.7-10).

The reference to Kuru-land makes it certain that we have here a human king raised to the height of the divine fire, not fire worshipped under a human name. The coronation of Parikṣit traditionally began the dark ages in 3101 B. C., which cannot represent any event outside the Indus valley, while the Indus culture must have been completely forgotten long before the *Mbh*. was composed or Kuru-land founded. The question "What became of the descendants of Parikṣit?" remains a riddle of the Upaniṣads.

Part of the difference between the various traditions is due, as pointed out, to their having been the special property of various clans. The *Mbh*. has been rewritten by the Bhṛgus,[9] as so much of the vedic exegesis and Buddhist scripture by the Kaśyapas. The *Mbh*. diaskeuasts were not content with adding new episodes, or incidents to old ones, but inserted a great deal of new doctrine. The whole of the huge Śāntiparvan of the *Mbh*. is doctrinal teaching from the mouth of the dominant figure in the older stratum of the epic, Bhīṣma, son of the river-goddess Ganges. Another great religious addition is the famous *Bhagavad-gītā*, which takes the Sāṃkhya, Upaniṣadic, and Buddhist philosophies twisted together to a new end; faith in a personal god which absolves everything, even killing brothers in war. The personal god is Kṛṣṇa, just being recognized at the time of the *Mbh* recension as Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa incarnate; the other incarnations were not yet acknowledged. The actual hero Kṛṣṇa who supposedly dictated the Gītā, and a feebler sequel the *Anugītā*, had naturally to lose any historical features he may have had. In the epic, he was charioteer to Arjuna, counsel to the five Pāṇḍava brothers. His own people, the Yadus, fought on the other side, and were later destroyed in a civil conflict. The name of Yadu goes back to Ṛgveda, while

plenty of Yādavas or Jādhavas survive to this day, whether descended from the ancient tribe or only claiming such distinguished origin with the indispensable help of brahmin legend. It will not be easy for archaeologists to discuss related pottery sequences and stratigraphy in such cases, though that has to be done before any history can be extracted from the sources under discussion. The syncretism was most successful ; the *Bhagavad-gītā* still remains powerful in forming the consciousness of upper-class Hindus by furnishing the ideological sphere where they fight out their conflicts. B. G. Tilak (who wanted to discover an Arctic home for the Aryans while he fought for the new though feeble Indian bourgeoisie) wrote a new commentary on the *Gītā* as his source of inspiration. Mahātmā Gāndhī, who led the real bourgeois-national liberation movement to success, relied profoundly upon the *Gītā*.

5.6. Leaving out the main legend of the *Mbh* and its secondary religious purpose, we may note the report that it was recited at a *yajña* sacrifice performed by Janamejaya, son of Parikṣit. The purpose of this sacrifice, which almost succeeded, was the total destruction of the Nāgas, which literally means 'Cobras' or 'Elephants'. That a widespread cult of the cobra is meant remains beyond doubt. Nāga tribes survive in Assam and Burma. Their demand for autonomy is a considerable source of embarrassment to the new national government today. Other Nāgas appeared in history in the northern part of Central India[9] as minor kings who issued a few coins for a brief period about 150 A.D. Nāḍasava, who made a gift at Bhājā (Lüders 1078) seems to have been a Nāga. The many-hooded cobra was used as a rope at the churning of the ocean. He now accompanies both Śiva and Viṣṇu as guardian and is worshipped throughout the country with a particularly important festival day of his own, the *Nāga-pañcamī*. An alternative name for the Nāga is Takṣaka, which also means 'carpenter' ; the traditional Nāga, a snake demon able to assume human form at will, is a superior craftsman. Taxila is derived from the same root *takṣ*, while innumerable local Nāga cult-spots survive to this day in Kaśmīr with antiquity duly attested by the *Nīlamata-purāṇa* (ed. K. de Vreese, Leiden 1949) which shows that they were the original cults of the Kaśmīr valley. The cobra Śrīkaṇṭha

was the guardian of Ṭhāṇesar (*Har.* 96, 111-113). The nāga name and cult are not Aryan, though *TS*. 5.5.10 calls for special offerings to the serpents as guardian deities of the sacred fire. The neighbouring tribe to the Sakyans (from whom the Buddha was descended) was the Koliyans, who seem in the older Pāli documents to be just on the verge of Aryanization. The later *Mahāvastu* discovers a leprous sage Kola of Banāras as their ancestor ; Pāli records state that they had a war (over the diversion of river waters by a dam) in which the Sakyans used un-Aryan methods against them, poisoning their water-supply. An eighth share of the Buddha's incinerated remains went (483 B.C. or 543 B.C.) to the Koliyans at Rāma-gāma, their tribal headquarters ; but an old traditional verse at the end of *DN*. 16 (*gāthā* 28) relates that the Nāgas worshipped those remains at Rāma-gāma. Therefore, some or all Koliyans were then Nāgas. The Buddhist Vinaya texts contain an injunction that Nāgas were not to be admitted[10] to the Order.

The late appearance and wide geographical spread of the Nāgas can be explained if they were savage tribes combined under a generic name by the Aryans, because of the snake cult which crept into later Aryan observances. Studying what evidence remains, it would seem that they were autochthonous tribes on the Aryan periphery who had advanced beyond the rest by some contact with Aryans. The Nāgas seem to retreat beyond the growing margin of Aryan territory, not necessarily because of physical retreat so much as advance of newer tribes to the Nāga level. This is a cultural movement in advance of the Aryan expansion, which included absorption of some tribes that had formerly been Nāgas, as with the Koliyans. The *Mbh* gives, at the very beginning, a long list of former Nāgas who appeared reborn as kings at the time of the great war. Among them is Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the blind king of the Kurus, who is generally a Nāga in Buddhist sources. Sovereignty passed to the Pāṇḍavas only after a jewel was torn out of the head of Aśvatthāman, son of their brahmin teacher Droṇa, who was himself born from a jar as were the hundred Kuru sons of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Aśvatthāman is not given as a king in the *Mbh*. However, his father Droṇa was rewarded for a while with the northern Pañcāla kingdom by the Pāṇḍavas, though the Pañcāla king was their father-

in-law. These five brothers had the Pañcāla princess Draupadī as a wife in common. Such polyandry is supposed to be un-Aryan, though the vedic peasant-gods (the Maruts) had a common wife Rodasī, and the Nāsatyas may at one time have been joint husbands of Sūryā, the sun-goddess, later their sister. These remnants of group-marriage disappeared, though polygamy remained. To have a jewel in the forehead is the traditional mark of a cobra. Aśvatthāman counted, for no reason now apparent, as one of the seven immortals (*cirañjīvin*), and was the king Spatembas reported by Megasthenes. The whole story of the great Bhāratan war goes back to a lost non-Aryan or pre-Aryan nucleus, for the very capital Hāstinapura (Delhi) is synonymous for 'City of the Nāgas', the word Nāga being applied also to the elephant (*hastin*) perhaps because of the snake-like trunk. Nāga also means 'noble in character' according to Buddhist tradition. Inscriptions (*EI*. 9.174-81) show that, as late as the 11th century A.D., it was an honour for kings to claim Nāga descent. The extraction of history from the *Mbh*. will not be easy because of this mixture. The historical value of the entire *Mbh.-Purāṇa* complex is at present negligible,[12] except in small portions confirmed by some other data.

Totemism is regarded by many, some of my countrymen among them, as something low, savage, barbarous, unworthy of a great civilization. We are not dealing with primitive totemic societies but with more developed ones where the clan was not yet on the same level as a surname. These more advanced groups, however, were assimilating other really primitive tribesmen who still existed. Totemic survival, as in the animal or edible-plant gentile names at Rome like Porcia (pig), Asinia (ass), Fabia (bean), is quite evident at all stages. The food-philosophy of the *Taittirīya* (2.2) and *Maitrī* (6.11-12) Upaniṣads, that all creatures are produced from food, live by food, pass into food, is excellent sublimated totemism. The whole Buddhist theory of transmigration could not have been believed but for a general belief characteristic of animal totemism identifying a man with his totem, as we have seen with the Nāgas. As for special totemic rites, they would remain clan-secrets on the whole, till they died out.

The Sanskrit word *vrata*, which means ritual, with a secondary meaning of 'feeding exclusively upon', seems also to have totemic connections. The Buddha came across a follower of the dog-*vrata*, Acela Seniya by name (*DN*. 24, *MN*. 57). This person imitated a dog in all things; after his death, as predicted by the Buddha, he was naturally reborn as a dog, or in a special portion of the underworld reserved for followers of his *vrata*. The Kukkura (=dog) tribe is mentioned among dangerous human foes by *Arth*. 11.1. Buddha's companion at the time (Koliyan lay follower Puṇṇa) was a bull-*vrata* tribesman and could thus expect a similar fate — the fear of which converted him. The bull-*vrata* layer of the underworld is confirmed by *Mbh*. 5.97.13-14, which interpolates a verse to the effect that the *vrata* means showing the placidity and other high spiritual qualities of the bull! The dog-*vrata* of Acela seems lunacy, but the particular form in which it was expressed was taken seriously, because it was familiar in class observances. We have other *vratas* in the Pāli: those of a bat, a goat, an elephant, being then taken to be ascetic practices in imitation of these animals, like that of Acela with the dog. The same word, however, is used as late as the 7th century by the poet Bāṇa, who describes his ancestors of the Vātsyāyana *gotra* as followers of the *kukkuṭa* (cock) *vrata*;[13] one of the commentators points out that *vrata* also means an article of (ritual) diet. The double meaning was essential for Bāṇa's purpose.

5.7. We have thus come to parallels of the observations given in the second chapter of this book, showing a survival of primitive elements next to an advancing society. This feature characterizes Indian society at all times. There was plenty of room to expand, which meant a vaster scale with far slower pace of advance to full civilization. Special brahmin clans like the Kaśyapas and Bhṛgus took prominent part in the process of assimilation, but brahmins in general followed suit. Many of them had normally to go from the U.P. to Taxila[14] or the frontier (*BrUp*. 3.3.1; 3.7.1) to learn their main business, the fire-sacrifice. By the time of the *Mbh*. recensions, the Madra country where these brahmins went to study appears barbarous; a long passage written into the *Mbh*. to explain why the un-Aryan bride-price was paid among the Madra people has

now been stripped off by text-criticism. Sometimes the brahmins are reduced to helplessness when asked by kṣatriyas to explain the sacrifice, or Brahmā (a new divine ideal). They then learn from these kṣatriyas as humble disciples e.g. from Pravahaṇa Jaivali (*ChUp.* 5.3 ; 1.8 ; *BrUp.* 6.2), Aśvapati Kaikeya (*ChUp.* 5.11-12) or king Janaka (*SB.* 11.6.2 etc.). This shows that the older brahmin tradition in the Gangetic basin could not have been of the Aryan sacrifice, but was something else ; perhaps secret lore from the Indus valley or from tribal medicine-men, or both.

That performance of the vedic ritual paid very well on occasion follows from gifts of entire villages to brahmin priests as fees at the sacrifice. The Kosalan king Pasenadi had endowed the brahmin Pauṣkarasādi with the village of Ukkaṭṭhā (*DN.* 3); the brahmin Lohicca with Sālavatikā (*DN.* 12). Both *gotras* are attested. His contemporary, Bimbisāra of Magadha, had given Khāṇumata to another brahmin, Kuṭadanta. That the book was rewritten in Asokan times does not spoil the value of the tradition, which there was then no reason to invent, as gifts to brahmins would be deplored by the Buddhists. The brahmins themselves tried to inflate reports of such magnanimity. In *AB.* 8.20 comes the injunction "Being anointed he (the king) should give gold to the brahmin who anoints ; a thousand should he give, a field and quadrupeds . . .". The book is a later addition ; the original sacrificial fee was cattle, barren heifers that brahmins would eat, gruel, or the like. *AB.* 8.22 goes on to speak of "tens of thousands of female slaves, ten thousands of elephants" given to Udamaya Atreya by king Aṅga ; the latter is known as a tribal name to the east of Magadha, the priest never being heard of elsewhere. The fantastic nature of this supposed gift will be recognized by anyone who has had to feed one elephant, let alone ten thousand. It does not betoken a plantation economy with slave labour, for the verses report only female slaves with necklaces, from the highest families of many countries ; moreover, the recipient gives them all away by the hundred, and is worn out by pronouncing the numerous gifts. It is difficult to know how much credit to give to supposedly ancient portions of such tradition. For example, the Asura Etadu of Ts. 2.6.9 might be a historical

Assyrian,[15] from the name. What can we make of the ten-headed brahmin who was the first born, the first to drink the Soma, according to *AV*. 4.6.1 ? He cannot be dismissed as pure fiction, because the *RV* has Navagva *and* Daśagva priests, of whom the latter ('of ten parts') might be responsible for the *AV* monster. The ten-headed demon king Rāvaṇa killed by Rāma was a brahmin according to all tradition ; there actually is a Rāvaṇin *gotra* in some Vasiṣṭha lists. All that we can say is that the priest-class was poor, never scrupled to rewrite or to expand old traditions, nor to absorb new ones, as long as it paid. The story of Uṣasti Cākrāyaṇa, a famished brahmin from Kuru-land (*ChUp.* 1.10-11) is a case in point. His fields were wiped out by a hailstorm or some such disaster, so that he had to migrate with his wife in search of a patron. On the way, he begged the leavings of soiled bean junket (*kulmāṣa*) from a man of low caste (*ibhya*), food that no brahmin would admit eating. That refreshed him, and he made a success at the king's assembly the next day.

The new priesthood influenced the formation of a society out of Aryan and non-Aryan tribes. This was not deliberate, conscious, planned action, but the result of hunger. The sole aim was to make a livelihood. The long, rigid training in the vedas which gave the brahmins solidarity beyond the tribe, which helped them loosen tribal bonds to form a society, also made them unfit to handle plough or bow. There were too many of these new priests to live well by ritual service for tribal and clan chiefs. Poverty gave many of them a measure of sympathy with the poorer castes. They helped form a society better fitted to the new concept of property — a concept not shared by all tribesmen because it was not (like the herds) the result of their common effort — agrarian property. The story of Baka Dālbhya or Glāva Maitreya (*ChUp.* 1.12) shows, if it has any rational meaning, how brahmins could penetrate non-Aryan tribes, take over new cults, and so ultimately help food-gatherers turn into food-producers. This two-named brahmin (whose alternate names are possible if one was patriarchal, the other matriarchal) spied upon some "dogs" one night during his travels as a student. These dogs asked their leader, a white dog, "Lord, chant up some food for us".

At dawn, the white dog performed a ritual chant, with the necessary circumambulation and the brahminical expletive *hiṅ*. The story makes sense only as describing some rites of a clan with a dog totem, but the silent brahmin observer is very significant. Unfortunately, there exists far too little material to carry such investigations further.

The flexibility of the brahmin, though motivated by greed, was useful nevertheless in the process of assimilation with minimum use of violence, as we shall see later. The brahmins were themselves genetically mixed at the time, as follows from Patañjali's comment on *Pān.* 2.2.6 : " When one has seen a certain black (person), the colour of a heap of black beans, seated in the marketplace, one definitely concludes (without inquiry) that that is not a brahmin ; one is (intuitively) convinced thereof." As against this, there is a clear formula in *BrUp.* 6.4.16 for the birth of a black son to a brahmin : " Now in case one wishes that a swarthy (*śyāmo*) son with red eyes be born to me, that he be able to repeat the three vedas, that he attain the full length of life ! They two (the parents) should have rice boiled with water and should eat it prepared with ghee. They two are likely to beget (such a son)." Other methods for begetting sons of whiter complexion (as well as a daughter) show the eastern brahmins of the period to have been as inhomogenous as today. Their poverty, the long rigid training needed to be a good brahmin, even their vain pretensions to superiority over the other castes (which they were not accorded in practice) were all put to good use. In order to be respected by the lower classes, the ideology of the ruling class must be practised seriously by the upper classes themselves with a certain amount of obvious hardship. This accounts for the superficial features of brahminism which distract attention from its role in a class society. Society hereafter was divided sharply into classes. The caste system was an expression of the division, though tradition marked its nature.

5.8. Thus we do gain something from the indirect analysis of documents in which it is most difficult to separate pure myth from historical reality — a difficulty which trips up many who try to base their history upon such records. Among them may

be mentioned Pargiter, who concluded that a Gangetic civilization preceded the *RV.*, ignoring the fact that the Gangetic basin could not have been cleared as early as 1500 B.C., for lack of metals. It was still densely forested at the time of the Buddha. It took Hiuen Tsang over 70 miles of travel through the great forest to reach Banāras about 630 A.D. (*Beal* 2.43). What we see is a whole series of tribes, some most primitive but learning from the Aryans, defending themselves with bow and arrow, sometimes being Aryanized in turn. Some had advanced to the stage of kingdoms, with small capital cities that had been tribal headquarters. Others, like the Vajjis (also called Licchavis) and Mallas remained oligarchs with a nomadic past, hence called *vrātyas*. These had not yet been penetrated by brahmin institutions, including the four-class caste system, hence retained the tribal forms in their greatest purity. The attempt to brahminise *vrātya*[14] institutions, particularly their fertility rites, as in *AV*. 15, did not succeed. The *vrātya* remained by definition one not amenable to brahmin ritual. The Licchavis received high praise from the Buddha as he walked northwards on his last journey. The great teacher predicted that as long as the Licchavis held to their tribal institutions, they would be matchless—and so they were. The Buddhist and Jain monastic Orders were modelled upon such tribal constitutions, quite naturally, seeing that the Buddha came from tribal Sakyans the Jain founder Mahāvīra from tribal Licchavis. The tribal stamp here parallels the mark left upon the Church by the Roman empire. The rising protest against a pastoral life which could not feed the increasing population so well as plough-cultivation may be traced even in brahmin works. *ŚB*. 3.1.2.21 contains a famous passage which proves that beef-eating would be a sin, because the gods had put the vigour of all the world into the cow and the ox. It ends with the blunt declaration of the imposing Upaniṣadic sage Yājñavalkya : "That may very well be, but I shall eat of it nevertheless if the flesh be tender". Beef was a normal article of contemporary brahmin diet, as appears from *AV*. 12.4, on the necessity of giving away sterile cows to the mendicant brahmin, who could only have eaten them. If the (non-brahmin) owner "roasts the sterile cow at home, whether he makes a sacrifice of her, or not, he sins against the gods and brahmins,

and as a cheat falls from heaven." The brahmins meant to preserve their main source of food and hence their theology, no matter how uneconomic the pastoral life had become on which both diet and ritual were based. The great religious teachers arose from tribal kṣatriyas at the same time in the same place, among a host of others founders of similar sects like Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta, Makkhali Gosāla, etc. This very fact shows that the tribe had reached a state of disintegration. Society had to be reorganized on a basis that tribal life could not furnish; a philosophy and religion (as distinct from ritual) — a superstructure, in short — beyond that of the tribe was needed by the most advanced elements to cement the various components together.

An example of the manner in which important discoveries in food-production leave their stamp on the language and ritual may not be out of place. The word *taila* is used in classical Sanskrit, and most Indian languages, for 'oil' in general, but means literally 'from *tila* (sesamum)'. The first widely used Indian vegetable food-oil was derived from sesamum. The solitary, late-vedic reference to sesamum (known to pre-Aryans) *AV*. 1.7.2. is doubtful (*tailasya* or *taulasya*) though the crop seems to have been known to the Indus culture. Vedic society, and the frontier regions, laid the greatest stress upon pastoral foodstuffs, while only butter-fats were used in ritual; thus Pāṇini mentions *tila* thrice but not *taila* explicity. The nourishing seed seems first to have been eaten boiled into a rich gruel with rice. The *Arth*., on the other hand, has over 41 references to *taila*, not to speak of 4 or more to *tila*, which shows how the economy changed from pastoral to agrarian. Correspondingly, we have names Tilottamā ('as fine as sesamum'), for the loveliest of the Apsaras houris in heaven (*Mbh*. 1.203-4; reason for name, 1.203.17) who turned the heads of gods and demons by her beauty. Black sesamum is still used in the *tilāñjali* food ceremony for the Manes; *tila* seeds (as representing both wild and cultivated plants, cf. *ŚB*. 9.1.1.3) are the older ritual gifts. The sesamum is particularly to be given at the beginning of the sun's northern course, i.e. passage into Capricorn (three weeks too late in the current Indian calendar), the famous *makara-saṃkrānti*, which incidentally comes about

the time of the second sesamum crop in drier parts of the country. With this is connected a special rite, known in western India as the *sugaḍ*, wherein specially made small earthern vessels (*su-ghaṭa*) are filled with *tila* and first-fruits of all sorts, decorated on the outside with turmeric and red pigment, and worshipped by the women; the women that are married but not widowed exchange such pots among themselves as gifts. That is, we have again the ancient *pūrṇa-kumbha* fertility rite not known to the purāṇas or brahmin ritual as such. That the twelvefold division of the Zodiac (and the particular sign) do not belong to the oldest Indian calendar shows how new ritual could arise when suited to the means of production and the mentality of the producer. The later coconut made its way into all sorts of ritual, and has a festival day of its own in the west (August full-moon) which has grown out of the coastal strip less than two centuries ago. It should be noted that agricultural discoveries of the highest importance such as rotation of the crops, and the coarser cereals (e.g. sorghum), seem to have left no special mark upon ritual. Crop rotation was, in all probability, incidental to the supply of food proteins. The ban upon arms, the beef-eating tabu, made it necessary to grow a certain minimum of the essential proteins on the land, in the form of peas, grams, pulses, beans. The very same plants, being leguminous, fix nitrogen in the soil, and can be planted in the rice seed-plots after the rice seedlings have been transferred (cf. *Arth*. 2.24). The principal food-grain crop is produced over the rainy season, the supplementaries mostly in winter; the wonderful climate permits this (with irrigation, even a third crop). Rotation was a consequence of the vegetarian diet and economy, not the result of long observation and forethought; especially where rice, which gives a balanced meal ONLY with meat, fish or legumes, was first the staple crop. The rougher food-grains were taken over from the aborigines, as local products to supplement the main staples.

The incipient society had at its disposal all the Aryan tools and techniques, plus a few acquired since. *AV*. 3.12 gives the ritual for leading river-water into new canals; *AV*. 6.91.1 speaks of ploughing with yokes of six and eight oxen. The

buffalo had been tamed for agriculture. Without this useful and characteristically Indian animal, the swampy tract that most of the Gangetic basin must have been could not have been brought under cultivation; yet the animal has left no mark upon our scriptures, except that it was assigned to Yama, the death-god to ride on, and made into a demon killed by the bloodthirsty mother-goddess Kālī. The horse was ridden for individual transport and in war, though the traditional chariot remained the more aristocratic method; we have noted the importance of the horse-sacrifice. The elephant had also been tamed for warfare, without imprint upon the sacred works. Poultry and pigs, of little importance in the economy, were domesticated. Houses were mostly of wood and thatch so that a dwelling presented to a brahmin could be dismantled for taking away (*AV.* 9.3). Nevertheless, bricks had long been used for altars and were now coming into more general use, along with stone, for durable construction. People cultivated family holdings which were an inalienable right deriving from membership in a tribal or other community group, and a mark of such membership. Yet a new type of landholding was about to develop, because the brahmin need not have fixed ties with any tribe, though he too had always a caste-group. His sacrificial gifts, once made, would be free from tribal control or obligations, including the tribute-tax settlers had to pay. Thus, his property, even when held in common with other brahmins, differed from ordinary tribal property. In the sixth century B.C., perhaps a century earlier, regular silver coinage made its appearance, signalizing a new type of trade relationship along the entire route from Magadha to Taxila and Persia. However, society did not advance steadily to intensive commodity production, primarily because the peculiarly self-contained Indian village later became the norm. There was always plenty of undeveloped territory, though wild beasts and tribesmen made it difficult for solitary individuals to colonize it without group effort. It was inevitable that these new developments in production should call for new ideologies, expressed through religion. It was also inevitable that the state that controlled the river route and the route to the only good supply of metals should dominate the rest. It was not enough to

know metals ; the problem was to obtain them in quantity, to use their control to rule over a population that needed metal tools to clear the forests of U.P. and Bihār, thus producing a new and far greater surplus from India's best land.

The great eastern trade route went north from Rājgīr to the Ganges, which it crossed above Patna ; there was a branch in the opposite direction to Gāya. Beyond the river, it went to Vaiśāli (Basārh), headquarters of the Licchavis, through Kusinārā (Kasiā) where the Mallas dominated (and where the Buddha died on his last journey) to the Nepal Terai somewhere near the Rummindei pillar of Asoka that marks Buddha's birthplace. The Sakyan capital Kapilavastu was not far from this spot. Thence the route swung west, through the capital Śrāvastī (Set-Mahet) of the leading kingdom of the day Kosala, and so to the Delhi-Mathurā region. The far end of the trade route across the Punjab was Taxila ; one important branch must have gone south perhaps from Śrāvasti through Kosambī (Sanskrit Kauśāmbī, the modern Kosam on the Jumna) to Ujjain, which was the logical centre of diffusion of small trade into the wild tribal south. This road too needs systematic archaeological exploration. Digging no more than a dozen test-pits going down to the natural soil on carefully chosen spots would tell us enough to rescue the written tradition from pure myth. A good air-survey would reveal the entire route, with few gaps. The land route had a supplementary feeder that soon overshadowed it completely, the Ganges river, on which Banāras was an early port. Sea navigation had commenced by the time of the Buddha. The more venturesome traders went down the river to its mouth, and further along the coast.

Notes and references :

1. For ethnography and a fair linguistic survey, see P. Meile's reports in chap. II-III of Renou-Filliozat, *L'Inde classique.*

2. B. S. Guha in the *Census* of India, 1931, vol. I, part 3 gave the most recent classification. Three groups also appear in P. C. Mahalanobis and D. N. Majumdar and C. R. Rao's analysis of U.P. Measurements during 1941 in *Sankhyā*, vol. 9, 1948-9, pp. 90-324. My criticisms published in the journal of the Institute Etnographii, Moscow, 1956, show that economic and caste groups cannot be distinguished by the

type of ethnography practised by such observers, quite apart from the data being biassed or insufficient.

3. An example of Marr's system may be seen in the paper of B. Nikitine : *Notes sur le Kurde*, in the volume of "Oriental studies in honour of Cursetji Erachji Pavry", London 1933, pp. 306-335.

4. Ambā, Ambikā, Ambālikā all mean 'mother'. The triad is given in *TS.* 7.4.19. Ambikā is given alone as sister of Rudra, in *TS.* 1.8.6 *f;* immediately afterwards in the same hymn comes the god Tryambaka.

5. The *śāligrāma*, a fossil ammonite taken as a symbol of Viṣṇu to be deposited among brahmin Lares and Penates, is generally understood to be from the Gaṇḍak river, for proper sanctity. The custom may be as old as the *ŚB* passage.

6. It is not clear whether Navavāstva Bṛhadratha refers to one or two separate kings, and whether the person(s) were protected or crushed by Indra Vaikuṇṭha in *RV* 10.49.6.

7. Bhīma and Kṛṣṇa looked upon old Rājgir (= Girivraja) from Gorathā-giri, according to *Mbh.* 2.18.30. The name was unexpectedly confirmed by epigraphs in the Barābar hills; cf. V. H. Jackson's report in *JBORS.* vol. I, pp. 159-172.

8. This was V. S. Sukthaṇkar's great discovery, published in the *ABORI.* vol. 18, pp. 1-76 as *Epic Studies VI* (Collected papers in the Sukthaṇkar memorial edition, pp. 278-337). The key was furnished by the unnecessary, repeated mention of Paraśurāma in the work, more or less in proportion to the inflation. Sukthaṇkar also showed in his study of the Nala episode (*Festschrift* F. W. Thomas, 294-303; Mem. ed. 406-415) that the *Rāmāyaṇa* was composed in all probability in the interval between the Bhārata and the Mahābhārata versions of the great epic.

9. The Nāga rule is magnified to impossible proportions by K. P. Jayaswal in his *History of India* 150 *A. D. to* 350 *A. D.* (Lahore 1933) but there is no doubt that there were some petty Nāga kings, (the first and last known), in the Vindhyan region and perhaps Mathurā at about this period. *DKA.* 49,53, just mention their rule.

10. Mahāvagga 1.63 (*SBE.* 13, pp. 217-9). The question is actually 'art thou human', meaning that the novice should not be a Nāga; this is clear from the commentaries.

11. The polyandry of the Pāṇḍavas is made reason to take them as Tibetan invaders, though there is nothing to prove the highly improbable notion that Tibetans were in a position to invade any country between 3101 B.C. and 1000 B.C., the termini set for supposed *Mbh.* war. Both polyandry and polygamy are survivals of group marriage. The levirate is clearly mentioned in *RV.* 10.40.2, another such survival.

One of the Sanskrit words for "wife", *dārā* is declined only in the plural, even when one person is meant.

12. F. E. Pargiter's *DKA* still remains the most useful critical attempt to get a historical nucleus from the purāṇas, by collation of all purāṇas, containing the king-lists. But the use derives only because of confirmation by coins and inscriptions.

13. P. 39 of the 7th Nirṇaysāgar edition, Bombay 1946. The commentator is clear that *vrata* has also the sense of eating: *kukkuṭānām vratam bhakṣaṇaṃ yena kṛtam....,* as also *kukkuṭavratam niyamaviśeṣaḥ;* ritual eating would be meant, for brahminism then had come very far from the beef-eating vedic stage.

14. Taxila was the great traditional center of Sanskrit education. Princes like Pasenadi were supposedly sent there for higher learning; even a Caṇḍāla, as in *Jāt.* 498 could go there to turn himself into a brahmin. The implication seems to be that students were taken without being embarrassed by questions of caste, which could not have been very rigid at the time, in spite of occasional brahmin pretensions. Satyakāma Jābāla was accepted (*ChUp.* 4.4) as a student by Hāridrumata Gotama though even his mother did not know who his father was, let alone the *gotra.* Lists of brahmin teachers in these Upaniṣads are given with a matronymic, which again proves fluidity of tradition; some elements not completely used to patriarchy were entering the Aryan fold as brahmins even at this period — and they continued to do so whenever they could get away with it, even in later times.

15. The opening phrase of the *RV*: *agnim iḷe purohitam* contains the verb *iḷ* which does not seem Aryan, and may be connected with the Assyrian *Ilu* (god, or honorofic title for kings); the Assyrian *dannu* = heroic can be made responsible for *dānava.* The question, why Assyrian, would then remain unsolved. Professor Leo Wiener of Harvard used to show unpublished notes dating from 1913, or earlier, tracing roots in Sumerian, Babylonian, and Assyrian common to Sanskrit, and Dravidian languages. This concordance means little, but it might be a field for systematic investigation, if one is prepared to face negative results after considerable expenditure of time. The major question to which such coincidences give rise is the following. In any given case, how should one ascertain whether a given 'un-Aryan' feature was adopted by some group of Aryans from older civilizations outside India (say the Mesopotamian) with which they had at some time in their migrations come into contact? Or, was it a survival from an older culture in India (the Indus Valley)? At present, we have not material enough for a clear decision. The usual fantastic conjectures disguise the main fact, namely that the means of production permitted such acquisition and survival of an odd word, trait, or superstition. Conjectures such as the identification of the great Akkadiam conqueror Sargon (*circa* 2400 B.C.) with the purāṇic "universal emperor" Sagara remain worthless unless one can

trace the literary genealogy of the sources or show why the fine technical achievements of the Sargonid age do not appear in India.

16. J. W. Hauer's *Der Vrātya* (vol. I, Stuttgart, 1927 no further volume available, if published) shows his approach in the subtitle: *die vrātya als nichtbrahmanische Kultgenossenschaften arischer Herkunft*. While the collection of references is systematic, the author failed to note successive changes in the meaning of "Aryan", as of "Vrātya". In Patañjali's time *vrāta* seems to have meant tribes living by use of weapons, implements, or guild crafts, but retaining the tribal chief and structure (cf. the comment on *Pāṇ.* 5.2.21). The original connotation of "wanderers" or "nomads" remained only in so far as the group was not tied down to fixed lands by farming settlements.

CHAPTER VI

THE RISE OF MAGADHA

THE organization which had enabled the Aryans to wipe out an ancient urban civilization on the Indus also made it possible for them to penetrate the wilderness to the east. The new, recombined society with two main castes gave them the labour power of the *śūdra*. Without the equivalent, it would not have been profitable to clear the land for pasture and for the plough. The further differentiation of the upper caste into caste-classes increased surplus production without the force and vigilance required in a slave-holding society, as in Greece or Rome. By the seventh century B.C., Indian settlements extended in a long uneven strip from Punjab to Bihar, decidedly heterogeneous in types of population or degree of advancement, but with enough of a common language and tradition to permit considerable trade and cultural inter course. Nevertheless, just those social relations within the tribe that had made the first settlements possible had at this stage turned into fetters which had to be broken before society could advance to a higher level. The necessary steps towards a remarkable new type of society were taken between 520 B.C. (Bimbisāra's conquest of Aṇgā) and 360 B.C. (Mahāpadma Nanda's destruction of Aryan tribes), both dates being approxi-

mate. Of this movement, the major advances were made in Magadha (Bihar), with the consequent extension of a Magadhan religion (Buddhism) and of the Magadhan empire to the whole country. The influence of both was felt beyond the frontiers. Both the religious procedure (to some extent a deliberate adoption) and the empire left ineradicable marks upon the country.

6.1. The historical center of gravity had already shifted from the Punjab to the Gangetic valley by the seventh century B.C. There were no changes of any great importance in the Punjab. The conquest by Darius towards the third quarter of the sixth century brought the land of the seven (or by then only five) rivers into chronological history. His inscriptions list Kambujiya, Gandāra, Hinduś among the provinces, which therefore extended through Afghanistan to the Indus, over previous Aryan settlements. Recruits and levies from the west Punjab (Hinduś) fought in the armies of Darius and Xerxes against the Greeks. Just at the margin, perhaps subjected to a nominal tribute by the Persians (when they could collect it) was the city of Taxila, a great center of overland trade between two economically powerful regions, namely the static Persian empire, and a growing kingdom in the Gangetic valley. The rest of the Punjab was in the vedic state, except that some tribes like the Pūrus had expanded, to an extent that would make them kingdoms by the time of Alexander. The remaining cities were tribal headquarters, overgrown villages but for Taxila and a few lesser centers like Peukelaotis (Puṣkaravatī, the city of the *puṣkara* lotus ponds, modern Charsadda); none of these compared in size and planned organization with Mohenjo-dāro or Harappā. The population of the Indus valley was now better armed, with a solid basis of pastoral and agrarian production (using the plough with small-scale canal irrigation) supplemented by trade.

Less is known of the southern peninsula which was in a state of late stone-age savagery, with a trifling amount of metal in use at a few undated spots. The pastoral life must have spread down some of the river valleys, at least to the Andhra coast. Some hardy traders and an occasional needy brahmin had begun to penetrate the south from Bihar, certainly as far

south as the middle Godāvari river. Our attention has therefore to be concentrated upon the Gangetic innovations. More is known of them than of the Punjab or the south. They consummate a natural course of development to the logical conclusion. This region was soon to give rise to the first great "universal monarchy" under the Mauryans.

Our sources for this period are mainly the Buddhist works, supplemented by purāṇic king-lists and some Jain records. The Buddhist chronicle, *Mahāvaṃso*, was repeatedly brought up to date in Ceylon. Its chronology suffers from an unexplained jump of about 60 years, which makes it difficult to say whether the Buddha died about 543 B.C. or 483 B.C. I shall proceed on the reasonable assumption of the later date for the event. The Jain Mahāvīra (Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta) was a slightly younger contemporary, according to reports from both sects. The brahmin purāṇas suffered a major redaction at the beginning of the Gupta rule, say about 320 A.D. For examples of previous re-editing: king Divākara of Ayodhyā in the 'middle country', in the Ikṣvāku line is mentioned in the present tense (*DKA*. 10). Also in the present tense are the Pūru Adhisīmakṛṣṇa (*DKA*. 4) at 'the city of the Nāgas', (old Hāstinapura in the Delhi-Meerut region), and the Bṛhadratha Senājit (*DKA*. 15) at Girivraja (Old Rājgīr). Pargiter took this as a concordance for the first redaction of the purāṇas, which may well be true. However, the purāṇas have the deplorable brahmin habit of putting in an ordered sequence traditions that belong to different groups. For example (*DKA*. 66-7) Siddhārtha, Rāhula, Prasenajit are given as consecutive Ikṣvāku rulers — though Siddhārtha (supposed name of the Buddha before enlightenment) never ruled even his own Sakyan tribe. His son Rāhula was ordained a monk in childhood. Prasenajit, who died at about the same time as the Buddha, was paramount ruler of Kosala, but not an Ikṣvāku. Thus the present tense may not represent a first redaction but simply three different local documents put together. Adhisīmakṛṣṇa's son Nicakṣu is said (*DKA*. 5) to have been driven by the Ganges floods to move his capital down to Kauśāmbi (= Kosambī, Kosam on the Jumna). This seems a logical choice, in view of the excellent situation of the

latter place for trade. So rare a supplement to the meaningless list of names may be confirmed by digging, for excavations at old Hāstinapur seem (according to journalistic preliminary reports) to show evidence for such a flood. There has been no confirmatory report from the Allahabad University excavations at Kosambī, though presumably any grey ware found would be evidence of a common culture (*cf. AI.* 10-11.4, 150-51). In that case, the grey ware should not simply be labelled 'Aryan', but associated with some particular tribe, say the Pūrus; Aryan differentiation had gone far enough to justify this. Finally, the *Jātakas,* a collection of 547 double stories, fables, and legends show us how the common people lived. Each narrative is supposedly related by the Buddha to explain a current happening in terms of an older event, whose characters were reborn to act out the 'present' story. These tales are available in a good edition (Fausböll), a satisfactory translation (*Jāt.*), and a valuable analysis (*Fick*). Nevertheless, though the tradition may be old, the *Jātakas* cannot be utilized directly for a picture of social relations at the time of the Buddha. The reason is that the *Jātakas* were written down much later, in a traders' environment — perhaps during the Sātavāhana period. They have, in addition, been influenced by the lost Ceylonese versions of Buddhist stories from which the present text was again reduced to Pāli. The Buddhist canon was mostly formed about the time of Asoka, a part even later. Only the fact that society and its means of production changed slowly, that there was no special reason to invent the particular details cited, allows parts of the canon to be used as evidence for conditions at the time of the Buddha's death.

The change in society is manifested by a new set of institutions: mortgage, interest, usury. Debt was known from vedic times. The word *ṛṇa* for debt originally meant 'sin', or transgression. The indebted gambler of *RV.* 10.34.10 'goes fearfully in search of wealth (*dhanam*) at night into the house of another', whether to borrow secretly, or to steal. *AV.* 6.117-9 gives hymns to be recited when the debt to one who has passed away was cleared; presumably, this is a precaution against being haunted. There is no mention of interest. However, the word for interest *vṛddhi* = 'growth' clearly implies the

sharing of a crop for which the seed had been borrowed. Equal shares between creditor and debtor, with the former risking total loss by crop failure, could have led to the institution of 'half-share-croppers', the later *ardhasītikas*. In early historical times the rules are (*Arth.* 3.11):

"A monthly rate of interest of 1¼ *paṇa* per hundred (15% annually) is pious and just; five *paṇas* (60%) normal in trade; 10 *paṇas* (120%) for enterprises that involve journeys through forests; 20 *paṇas* (240%) for sea-voyage enterprises. Any person who charges, or causes to be charged, a higher rate is to be fined the first *sāhasa* fine (up to 96 *paṇas*); each witness to the transaction, a fine at half the rate. The behaviour of both creditor and debtor becomes irregular, should the king not administer justice properly.

"Interest in grain becomes due at the harvest. It may be allowed to grow, taking the prices (of grain at times of loan and collection) into account, to a half of the original loan...Where the place of the enterprise is nearby and fixed, interest is to be paid annually. One who has migrated for good, or has lost his enterprise must pay (a total of) double the loan [as capital and interest; a practice still current in some parts of India]...The debt of one who is engaged in a long sacrifice, or studies in the teacher's house, or a child, or of one without means, is to pay no interest...The sons, or the relatives who inherit, or the co-debtors, or the sureties must pay debt and interest on a loan to one who has died."

These practices had been standardized by 300 B.C. from fairly old custom, say of two centuries or more, for debt and interest are mentioned in early Buddhist scriptures. They are both cause and effect of the new productive forms in Magadha — of trade, commodity production, merchant capital. Interest was neither compounded, nor charged when the total debt had risen to some preassigned level, normally double the loan. Long-term loans were exceptional. The high rates on loans to caravan and boat traders imply a proportionately greater risk, with no chance of recouping the loss. These rates also prove the highly profitable nature of such enterprises at the time. The financier thus behaved like an insurance agent, and a business partner, rather than a cautious usurer.

6.2. In the Gangetic valley, about 600 B.C., there coexisted distinct sets of social groups in various stages of development. Bengal was covered by a dense, swampy forest. Considerable patches of Bihar and U.P. were still thinly

inhabited by tribesmen who did not speak an Aryan language, and had little direct contact with the Aryans. Above them were developed tribes normally in conflict with Aryans. They still retained their own languages. These higher non-Aryans may be grouped under the generic name Nāgas. Both sets of tribesmen were scattered throughout the region not settled by food-producers. The stage above the Nāgas was that of Aryan tribesmen settled along the river and land trade-routes. Each of these tribes spoke an Aryan language, and many had differentiated into caste-classes. These Aryans were thus divided into two main groups, of which the simpler had not been permeated by brahmin ritual. The Aryan tribesmen constituted an oligarchy which exploited śūdra helots. It is not clear from the names of tribes and individuals whether a particular Aryan tribe had a recent non-Aryan past. That some had taken to a new (Aryan) language and to food-production with cattle and the plough seems clear. The argument is that these tribes find no mention in the vedas, or *Brāhmaṇas*; nor did any of them seem to follow vedic ritual. The remaining, brahminised tribes had gone far towards dissolution, because of their internal four-caste division into classes whereof the vaiśya was subject to nearly as much oppression as the śūdra. The chiefs of such four-caste tribes had virtually absolute power, used for aggression. Though tied together by indispensable trade, these varied communities were never at peace. Even the Aryan kingdoms fought incessantly among themselves.

Force, with one dominant group which reduced all the rest to slavery, would not have solved the contradictions. There was neither enough surplus nor enough commodity production for extensive slavery to be profitable. The territory was still thinly settled over long distances in difficult country. There was plenty of room for retreat of the tribesmen as well as for expansion of plough-cultivation, in contrast to the limited useful terrain in Greece or Italy.

The *Aṃguttara-Nikāya*[1] speaks by name of sixteen great tribal people's territories (*mahā-janapada*) traditional from about the 7th century B.C. The furthest away from Magadha were Kamboja and Gandhāra, the Kambujiya and Gandāra which occur as place-names with Hinduś in the list of Darius's

conquests. The first was in Afghanistan. Gandhāra extended into the Kandahār valley. The leading city of the frontier region was Taxila, the great center of trade and brahmin learning. The Kamboja people are cited for their ritual slaughter of insects, moths, frogs and snakes, which receives support from Avestan tradition. The unidentified city Kukkuṭavatī, where a king Mahā-Kapphina ruled, was near Kamboja or perhaps in Kaśmīr. A Gandhāran king Pukkusāti of Taxila exchanged gifts of costly trade goods with Bimbisāra of Magadha, and travelled on foot to see the Buddha. The frontier king and Magadhan Teacher are supposed to have met at a potter's house (*MN.* 140). The king was gored to death by a cow soon after. The "kingdom" of Assaka (Aśmaka) was near the Godāvarī river in the south. Adjacent thereto was the Āḷaka country. Both of these were Andhras (Andhaka). Little is known of either. Bāvarī, a brahmin later converted by the Buddha, had founded his āśrama near these kingdoms, where he lived as a food-gatherer by *uñcha* (gleaning after the harvest, a highly recommended brahmin *vrata*) and on fruits, presumably wild. Aśmaka became important in trade. More important was the kingdom of Avanti, with a capital at Ujjain. Its king Pajjota (Pradyota) is famous in a romantic cycle of legend as enemy and then father-in-law of Udayana. King Udayana ruled over the Vaṃsa (Vatsa) kingdom with capital at Kosambī on the Jumna. A major trade route passed through Kosambī to Ujjain. The Pradyotas occupied the Magadhan throne for 138 years according to the unconfirmed purāṇas. Ajātaśatru, king of Magadha is shown by *MN.* 108 as repairing the fortifications of Rājgīr just after the death of the Buddha, in anticipation of a Pajjota raid. Such reports are hard to evaluate, in view of the distance and terrain between the two capitals. The great 6th century Magadhan physician Jīvaka Komārabhacca had travelled to Ujjain to cure a Pradyota king ; the king had sent him presents of very costly garments called *sīveyyaka,* which would mean from the Śibi[2] country, modern Shorkoṭ in the Punjab. There were three famous Buddhist monasteries Ghoṣita, Kukkuṭa, and Pāvārika, supposedly named after the three donors, at Kosambī. The leading monk of Kosambī, Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja, does not appear in the central Buddhist tales. It is doubtful

whether his legend is original or later written into the canon because of the traders of Kosambi. Of the rest, the Śūrasena kingdom with capital at Mathurā was known to the Greeks. The Buddha rarely went there. It was not popular among the almsmen because of five great shortcomings: "uneven roads, excessive dust, vicious dogs, cruel Yakṣas (demons), and a considerable difficulty in getting alms". Three Aryan tribal kingdoms of Kuru, Pañcāla, and Matsya were known to the epic tradition also. The first has already been considered in the last chapter. The Uttara-pañcālas had a capital at Kampilla. Little is known of the Matsyas, whose name occurred in the Ten-King battle against Sudās. Their traditional land is modern Bharatpūr. The Cetiya (Cedi) kingdom and its king-lists occur in *Jāt*. 422, which speaks of the destruction of the line through a priest's curse. Elsewhere, the kingdom seems identical with the Madra. A famous *Mbh*. episode was the death of Śiśupāla, king of Cedi, at the hands of Kṛṣṇa. In the early middle ages, Cedi became the name of a state in central India by the Narmadā river. The rapid catalogue serves only to prove the extent of settlement, trade, development of kingship.

All these took little direct part in the main developments, which concern the remaining great *janapadas*. Among these, two remained independent, powerful, military tribal oligarchies, expanding beyond their proper *janapada* territory. The Mallas should be the Malloi in Alexander's campaigns, though the latter are identified with the later Mālava tribe (in spite of a missing syllable). The Gangetic Mallas occupied terrritory just to the east of the Kosalan sphere of influence, with two known centers at Pāvā (modern Paḍaonā) and Kusinārā (Kasiā) where the Buddha's last hours were spent. They were independent, though not so feared as their eastern neighbours, the Vajji or Licchavi kṣatriyas. Malla later means athlete or wrestler (like the Iranian Pehlevān from Pehlevi). The usage goes back to the two Malla pancratiasts Cāṇūra and Muṣṭika killed by Kṛṣṇa and his brother in the arena. Malla and Licchavi are bracketed together as low mixed castes, both the offspring of *vrātya* kṣatriyas. This proves that they did not follow brahmin ritual. There is no mention of their indulgence

in vedic sacrifice. The Licchavi capital of Vesālī is the modern Basārh (Muzzaffarpur). The corrupted form *nicchavi* by which they were sometimes known was applied to the district of Tirhūt. Their traditional number of 7077 spread over their whole territory. Because they collected tribute individually, the *sabhā* assembly and dispensation of justice was more and more neglected. The name survived in the region for about a thousand years after the Buddha. The first Gupta emperor married a Licchavi princess Kumāradevī about 320 A.D.; coins were struck in their joint names — a most unusual procedure unless the Guptas were very proud of the alliance, for no Licchavi coins are known. The Buddha's own people, the Sakyans, were a small tribe just beyond the present Nepal frontier. Their pride of ancestry survived the loss of independence, for they were under the suzerainty of the Kosalan king Pasenadi (Prasenajit) who had powers of life and death in extreme cases. The Sakyans were otherwise left to their own devices, as petty kṣatriyas who did not disdain to set their hands to the plough. Their king was a chieftain elected from the leading families in rotation for an unspecified term. There is no record of a king for either the Mallas or the Vajjians except a supposed war-leader, Ceḍaga, who led the confederacy against Ajātaśatru. Vincent Smith wanted to make the Sakyans non-Aryans, " sturdy hillmen " from Nepal. This is meaningless as ' Aryan ' had already come to mean a way of living which the Sakyans followed, while their language was certainly Aryan. The Pāli form of the name is Sakka; this occurs at the time of the Buddha in the Elamite version of the inscriptions of Darius, the Persian being Saka, the Babylonian Gimirri (? Cimri). There were three classes of the Sakas in the Persian empire: *tigrakhodā* (with pointed helmets), *homavragā*, 'Amyrgian' in Greek, but apparently following some *homa* ceremony; and *Sakā tyey taradraya*, ' Sakas beyond the ocean '. They have been identified with Scythians; but the possibility of some connection with the Sakyans is not entirely to be denied.

6.3. This brings us to the major, active expanding kingdoms, and to the political history of the times.[3] A king over such a realm had no tribal restrictions to his absolute rule. The class upon which he rested was primarily of those allowed to

bear arms, kṣatriyas who subsisted upon tribute gathered from the surplus produced on land upon which others laboured. They also collected the revenue for the king. With them were associated merchants and priests. Urban members of all three groups were designated as *paura*. The cities were formerly headquarters of some dissolved tribe, now subject to a king who need never have belonged to that tribe; yet the former *janapada* name persisted. Because of previous tribal custom, such *paura-jānapada* citizens had, and continued for a long time to have, a special relation to the state, as we shall see. This meant considerable, though not uniform, local autonomy. It meant less tribute than from others. Their formal assent was needed at the coronation. The important point is that there WERE others, whose labour supported both king and leading citizens. Land was not yet property in the sense of purchase and sale like trade goods. There is just one example of land-transfer for cash, the famous story of the opulent merchant-financier Anāthapiṇḍika of Śrāvasti. This generous trader purchased the grove of prince Jeta for a fantastic price set in jest, by covering the ground with (gold) coins. The ground was then given as a gift to the Buddhist Order. The transfer of title to land for cash payment depended at all times in Indian history entirely upon the general incidence of trade and cash transactions at the period in the given region. When cultivable land was the privilege, and token, of membership in a community, as it remained till the end of feudalism, purchase was as rare as adoption into the caste or commune. It can be said that private ownership of house-plots and gardens was a recognized fact in urban and suburban areas, by the 6th century B.C. There was no such private ownership of cultivated fields in general.

The oldest traditional kingdoms had begun to amalgamate by conquest or encroachment. Videha (capital Mithilā) was extinct; its last king Sumitra marked the end of the real Ikṣvāku line (*DKA.* 12) during the Buddha's infancy. Thereafter, we hear only of Kosalan rule followed by that of the Licchavis in this region (Darbhaṅgā), till the Magadhan conquest. Aṅgā, to the east of Bihār (capital Campā), had been conquered by or before Bimbisāra, king of Magadha (modern

Gayā and Patna districts), elder contemporary of the Buddha. The name thereafter remains hyphenated, Aṅgā-Magadhā. Banāras was the headquarters of a Kāsī *janapada*, absorbed similarly by the northern kingdom of Kosala, again with a conjoint title, Kāsī-Kosala. The importance of Banāras was due to its position on the river, as well as its manufactures. The adjective *kāsika* applied not only to the fine Banāras cloth but ultimately came to designate all wares of superlative quality. Prayāga (Allahabad) on the junction of the two rivers is nearly as sacred as Banāras today and now far more important as a transport center ; it was, apparently, then undeveloped. Kosala was by far the largest state of the period, with capital at Śrāvastī (Sāvatthi) on the Aciravati (Rāptī) river. The ruins of Sāvatthi are now covered by the field-mounds of two villages, Set and Mahet, near the frontier of Goṇḍā and Bahraich districts. The older Kosalan traditional capital had been Sāketa (Fyzabad), Ayodhya of the epic. Sāketa seems to have been center of south-Kosala, perhaps a second capital. Kosala was one of the early Aryan settlements along the Himālayan foothills which had to have an outlet on to the greater transport route, the Ganges river. In all these cases, the name of the country originates from that of a tribe. The process goes much further, in that early names of guild-castes and professions show tribal origin. Vaidehika means merchant in the *Arth*. The Māgadha was a professional bard but *Ms.* 10.47 makes him a merchant. This is the usual passage from tribe to guild, and later to caste, for both Māgadha and Vaidehika are given as castes of mixed origin in brahmin theory. If the Videhas had still existed as a tribe, the kingdom could not have become extinct with Sumitra. The *Manusmṛti* precept implies merely that citizens of Magadha were then the chief caravan traders.

The main struggle was inevitably between Kosala and Magadha ; but simultaneously both fought against the tribes. Kosala was far the more powerful in appearance, with its far greater territory, longer historical background, support of the priests who had received village grants, and some sort of proto-feudal nobility like the local kṣatriya administrator Pāyāsi Rājañña (*DN.* 23). The land was not densely cultivated, and

still contained many forest savages besides higher tribes like the Sakyans. Magadha had something far more important : the metals, and proximity to the river. Looking over the old traditional capitals, one is struck by the solitary occurrence of Rājgīr (=*rājagṛha*, 'the king's house') on the other side of the river, whereas the chain of Aryan settlements had all its links far to the north along the Himālayan foothills. To this day, the environs of Rājgīr preserve a comparatively wild appearance. The reason for a capital so far out of the way in what is not the most fertile land becomes clear when it is noted that the Barābar hills contain the northernmost known Dhārwār outcrop, with quickly accessible iron encrustations. Rājgīr had the first immediate source of iron at its disposal. Secondly, it straddled (with Gayā, to which the passage was through denser forest) the main route to India's heaviest deposits of both iron and copper, to the south-east in the Dhālbhūm and Singhbhūm districts. To this day, ancient but forgotten copper lodes are found under villages whose names begin with Tām (=copper), e.g. Tamar ; Tamluk was the ancient copper port a century or two later. The Indus valley copper came from Rājasthān or the south, in smaller quantities. Thus Magadha had a near-monopoly over the main source of contemporary power, the metals. The great Magadhan theorist of statecraft, Cāṇakya, was fully aware of the importance of mining : "The treasury depends upon mining, the army upon treasure" (*Arth.* 2.12). "The mine is the womb of war materials" (*Arth.* 7.14).

Details of the triangular contest may be gleaned from our records. The Kosalan drive southwards to Banāras had already become legend. The fabulous king Brahmadatta of Banāras had some success against Kosala, to the extent of capturing and executing its king Dīghīti with his queen (*Mahāvagga* 10.2 ; *Jāt.* 428). The fugitive Kosalan prince Dīghāvu recovered his kingdom, and perhaps annexed Kāsī as Brahmadatta's son-in-law (*Jāt.* 371). The same story is told of a Kosalan prince Chatta (*Jāt.* 118, 336), who recovered Kosala from Brahmadatta after his father's defeat, refortifying Sāvatthi to make it impregnable; this prince had run away to Taxila to learn the three vedas. In *Jāt.* 303, Dabbasena king of Kosala takes Kāsī ; in *Jāt.* 355, it is Vaṃka. *Jāt.* 532 says



Fig. 19. Punch-marks on Kosalan silver 3/4 *Kārṣapaṇas*. The dividing line indicates violent change of dynasty. Top may be Ikṣvākus.

that king Manoja of Banāras received the submission of Kosala. These names mean little, but the contest, which culminated in Kosalan hegemony over Kāsī, seems historical.

Pasenadi (Prasenajit), king of Kosala, bore the name of an ancient king of the Ikṣvāku line, but was not properly a



Fig. 20. Later Kosalan coinage in chronological order. Change to the Mātaṅga (elephant) dynasty, by peaceful succession to the preceding. The last should be Viḍūḍabha, Pasenadi the penultimate.

kṣatriya in the vedic-brahminical sense. He was of low tribal origin. His family is given as the Mātaṅgakula, which is equivalent to the present untouchable Māṅg caste, but at that time just developed from tribesmen of the elephant cult or totem. Mallikā, his chief queen, was daughter of a flower-vendor, who could not have been of the warrior or any other high caste. This may explain his special generosity to vedic brahmins, as an effort to gain a social rank above his caste, consonant with his royal position. His sister was nevertheless wife of king Bimbisāra, mother of the Magadhan prince Ajātaśatru. As marriage portion of this Kosalan (or Videha) princess went a village in the Banāras area. Bimbisāra's son Ajātaśatru imprisoned and later starved his own father to death. Such tension between king and heir-apparent is taken absolutely for granted by the *Arthaśāstra*. The king is there advised (*Arth.* 1.17) how to keep a close watch upon the prince, while *Arth.* 1.18 advises a prince how to trick his suspicious father. Pasenadi had himself been placed upon the throne by his father just after completing his studies. Bimbisāra had been crowned at the age of fifteen by his father, who also abdicated. Both these kings had developed a new type of army to replace the former armed tribe as a whole, an army without tribal basis which now owed loyalty only to the king. With the dynastic principle, there appeared a new office : that of *senāpati* = " lord of the army ", *i.e.* commander-in-chief, often held by the heir-apparent. Such an army could not have been maintained without regular taxes and extensive revenues. It was the main support of the king's absolute power. Bimbisāra was reported (*Mahāvagga* 5.1) to have ruled over 80,000 villages. The dissolution of the older tradition was further marked by the contemptuous adjective *brahmabandhu* for Magadhan brahmins, *kṣatrabandhu* for Magadhan kṣatriya kings. The termination *-bandhu* has the force of the Italian *-accio*, showing that neither caste fitted into the traditional vedic scheme.

This new phenomenon, that control of the state mechanism was to be had by direct violence, marks a profound change. The former need of tribal election or tribal sanction, which still persisted in the Punjab, had vanished in the greater kingdoms of the Gangetic basin. In fact, these kingdoms could not have

expanded under tribal conditions. On the other hand, there is no mention of a regular court nobility to replace tribal elders. The implication is that a whole new class of people, who now engaged in trade, the production of commodities, or of surplus grain on family holdings — in a word, the creation of private property — needed their immunity from tribal obstruction and from tribal sharing of the profit. To them, it was most important to have a king who could ensure safety on the road and the new rights of property ; not some particular king, but any king who would prevent reversion to tribal law and property-rights in common. This was all the easier because the Magadhan royal state engaged (as will be seen) in extensive trade in tax-grain and commodities, through royal officials. The king further claimed all prerogatives of former tribal chiefs ; as few as possible of their obligations were retained.

Pasenadi tried to rescind the grant of the Kāsī village that had been his sister's dowry, but was defeated several times in battle with his nephew. The village was strategically important as a bridgehead across the river, a foothold into territory that controlled the river and its greatest port. King Pasenadi was ultimately betrayed by a minister Dīgha-Kārāyaṇa of Malla tribal origin, whose uncle, the Malla Bandhula, had been promoted to high rank and then treacherously killed by the suspicious monarch. Kārāyaṇa handed over the royal insignia to Pasenadi's son and army commander Viḍūḍabha, while the father was paying a final visit to the Buddha. The aged Pasenadi fled to Rājgīr, accompanied only by one servant woman. They reached the Magadhan capital one night after the gates had been shut. The fugitive Kosalan ruler, then in his eightieth year, died of exhaustion during the night, and was given a state funeral by his nephew Ajātaśatru. Soon after this, Viḍūḍabha was swept away by an untimely flood along with his army, which had camped in the dry bed of the river Rāptī. Thus Kosala had neither king nor armed force while Ajātaśatru had a fine army to enforce his claim as Pasenadi's nephew. The ancient kingdom seems to have fallen to Magadha without a struggle. It vanished completely from history, though the identical name was later given to a medieval central Indian kingdom. By far the greater number of the

Buddha's discourses were pronounced at Śrāvastī ; but the first council of the Buddhist Order was convened immediately after his death at Rājgīr. This further proves that Kosala had lost its former eminence by 483 B.C.

6.4. There was, simultaneously, the bitter struggle with the tribes, even though they were on the verge of collapse from within because of fixed property in land by large households. Tribal life of the day could not have given scope or satisfaction to its most intelligent members if the Sakyan Gotama (Buddha) and the Licchavi Mahāvīra turned monks, to found great religions ; or if a Malla like Bandhula had to take service under a foreign king. Marriage outside the tribe is contrary to tribal law without some adoption ceremony. Yet we read that Bimbisāra had a Licchavi queen Cellaṇā, who is reported as Ajātaśatru's mother in Jain accounts, though all of Bimbisāra's queens would equally have been any prince's mothers according to the older rule. Pasenadi asked for a Sakyan wife. Inasmuch as he was overlord of the Sakyans, but of a lineage regarded as decidedly inferior, the demand embarrassed them greatly. They compromised by sending Vāsabha-khattiyā, the beautiful daughter of Mahānāma Sakya by a slave girl Nāga-Muṇḍā (whose name combines two aboriginal tribal names), passed off as Sakyan of pure lineage. The offspring of this marriage was Viḍūḍabha *senāpati*, who usurped the royal power. The trick played by the Sakyans had later been discoverd, but ultimately forgiven by Pasenadi. The son wiped out the insult with a direct attack upon the Sakyans, by washing his throne literally with Sakyan blood. Nevertheless, a few Sakyans did survive the massacre. Later Ceylonese rulers (who sought a match into the family made famous by the Buddha), discovered one or more Sakyan brides. The fact is that the Sakyans ceased to exist as a tribe. The real cause of military action was that even semi-independent tribes could not be tolerated without danger to autocracy, and to new forms of production.

Similar, though more difficult, was the action of Ajātaśatru against the Licchavis, who had made a confederacy of some sort with the Mallas. The traders at the river-route crossing complained that tolls had to be paid twice, for both the Magadhan king's men and the Licchavis collected them. The first

step was the foundation of Pāṭaliputra (Patna) later the capital of the Magadhan empire. Originally a stockade, the city layout was projected during the last year of the Buddha's life. As it was at the junction of the land-route with the river, and the Soṇ then joined the Ganges at that point, a complete blockade was thus set up. The next step was to sow internal dissension among the Licchavis, which (according to the story) was done by a brahmin minister whose nickname Vassakāra derived from this feat. He repeated the story of Zopyrus in Herodotos (Book III, end), by going over to the Licchavis in simulated disgrace from the Magadhan court. They received him with courtesy, which he repaid by secretly telling false tales to each against the others. Soon, the tribal *sabhā* assembly ceased to function. Ajātaśatru had only to march into Vesālī,



Fig. 21. Punch-marks of Ajātaśatru (?).

according to Buddhist tradition. The Jains report a hard-fought battle. Whether the details are true or not, Vesālī does not seem to have suffered the destruction observed at the Mallian sites, Pāvā and Kusinārā. The Malla confederates must have been systematically destroyed at the same time. *Cullavagga* 12.1.1. speaks of Vajjian (Licchavi) almsmen and lay followers at Vesālī, a hundred years after Ajātaśatru. Neither Mallas nor Licchavis survived as tribes (except perhaps offshoots in Nepal) so that Magadhan power was consolidated. Udayin, son or grandson of Ajātaśatru, completed the inevitable shift of the capital to Patna. It remained the leading Indian city for about seven hundred years.

A few surviving traditional kṣatriya tribes (like those of the Kurus and Pañcālas) were systematically wiped out by about 350 B.C. by king Mahāpadma Nanda of Magadha, who completed the work of Viḍūḍabha and Ajātaśatru. Their internal collapse was certain because of changed economic conditions, but the new tribeless kings could not allow such dangerous examples of democracy to survive. The purāṇas lament that

all kings thereafter were śūdra-like, which was strictly true according to the ancient vedic tradition. Their own strictures did not hinder brahmin acceptance of royal gifts from later kings of any caste (as from Pasenadi), nor their proclamation of successful upstarts as kṣatriyas. The one essential change was that the four-caste class system had finally become broader than, and independent of, any tribal regulations. Vassakāra is the first known brahmin minister (a new office for a brahmin) thus amply rewarded for a Machiavellianism without precedent. It is difficult to reject him as a purely legendary character, for the special technique of dissension was carefully described by a later brahmin minister, Cāṇakya (*Arth.* 11.1).

6.5. The most impressive happenings of the age are not those we have had to winnow so painfully out of the mass of legend and fable. The records are dedicated to a totally different purpose, the spread of religion. The greatest of these, Buddhism, spread far beyond the frontiers of Magadha. India became a sacred land to millions in Asia because the Buddhist doctrine arose here. Pilgrims from further China, Tibet, Mongolia still find their way across high mountains, parched deserts, and stormy oceans, through lands where incomprehensible languages are spoken, to recite their simple prayers in the shadow of the main stūpa at Sārnāth—heedless of an occasional brick that flies perilously off the dilapidated structure. Buddhism appeared as the great civilizing influence in Mongolia. It was the mainstay of feudalism (though leading to peace between barons) in China. The whole of both church and state in thinly settled, inaccessible Tibet were based upon the Buddhist canon. It has left us the most beautiful of cave art from Tun Huan to Ajaṇṭā, superb temples in Thailand, Burma, Indo-China, the colossal sculptures of the Bamian cliff in Afghanistan. Its legends induced parallel stories of Christ walking on water, the Christian saint's tale of Barlaam and Josaphat. The Essenian "Teacher of Righteousness" deduced by scholars from the Qumrān (Dead Sea) scrolls bears a title precisely equivalent to that of Buddha (*śāstā*, or *dhamma-cakka-pavattakka*) — surely not by accident. The doctrines of Manicheism were certainly influenced by it, while the Lukmān of the Mohammedans may ultimately be the Buddha. The

Barmecide minister whose empty feast in the Arabian Nights made the name into an adjective, came from a family of Buddhist abbots (*paramaka*) in Persia.

This most important religion was but one of several very similar movements that arose in Magadha at about the same time. Of these, Jainism survives in India to this day for the same reasons that prevented its spread outside the country. That is, it soon came to terms with caste and ritual, as Buddhism did not. The Buddhist emperor Asoka, and his grandson Daśaratha bestowed cave retreats upon the Ājīvikas. This sect was relatively unimportant beyond Magadha, though some of its followers had spread as far south as the Kanarese country by the end of the 13th century A.D. The Ājīvikas have long been extinct, even in name. There were several others whose doctrines are likewise known only through refutations in Buddhist and Jain documents, or in the equally hostile brahminical *Sarva-darśana-saṃgraha*. The opening *sutta* of *DN.* reports 62 such in hostile summary. The next *sutta* narrates how the parricide Ajātaśatru reviewed eight major doctrines, finally to lend favourable ear to the Buddha. That kings of the day were deeply interested in religious matters and protected these sects is proved by the reported friendship of Bimbisāra for both Jainism and the Buddha. Ajātaśatru 'of Kāsī' was comparable to Janaka as patron of Upaniṣadic brahmins (*BrUp.* 2.1). Pasenadi not only befriended the Buddha, but also performed *yajña* sacrifices. It follows that the new beliefs were the expression of some urgent need, some change in the productive basis.

Āḷāra Kālāma was a Kosalan Kṣatriya who taught seven steps of *samādhi* (intense concentration and thought control) ; Uddaka Rāmaputta taught an eighth. The Kaśyapa Pūraṇa preached that no action had any consequence of sin or merit. Makkhali Gosāla founded the Ājīvika sect on the belief that effort led to no fruit, that every being had to pass independently of his volition through 8,400,000 cycles of existence after which his sorrows would terminate automatically. Just as a ball of thread cast away unrolls till the end, so existence had to pass through these cycles. The sects of Pūraṇa and Gosāla approximated to each other, perhaps merged. The Ājīvikas

were popular with the southern Jains, while the other has similarities with Sāṃkhya philosophy. Even closer to the Jains was the agnosticism of Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta, a brahmin who neither affirmed nor denied that good and evil deeds had good and evil fruit, or that there was (or was not) a world beyond. Sañjaya's principal disciples, the brahmins Sāriputta and Moggallāna (whose relics wandered around the world till their recent deposit at Sāñcī), accepted the Buddha's doctrine to become its leading apostles. The proto-materialist Ajita Kesakambala believed that there was nothing in charity, *yajña*, ritual, gods, good or evil deeds ; the elements of which man is made dissolve into the original components earth, water, radiance, air, when he dies. Nothing is left of his virtues, soul, or personality. Pakūdha Kaccāyana's doctrine, which resembled that of the later Vaiśeṣikas, maintained the permanence of these four components plus three more : happiness, sorrow, and life ; none could kill, know, describe, or influence these fundamentals in any way whatever ; the sharp weapon which cut off a head merely passed through the interstices between these components. The far older Jain tradition went back to Pārśva Tīrthaṃkara, a couple of centuries earlier, who had preached non-killing (*ahiṃsā*), truth, non-stealing, renunciation ; to these Mahāvīra added sexual continence. Absolution could be obtained from sins committed in former births by these observances and by asceticism. The nucleus of Buddhism is the noble (*ārya*) eightfold path : Proper activity of the body (avoidance of taking life, of stealing, of fornication) ; proper speech (truthfulness, not carrying tales, no cursing or vituperation, avoidance of idle chatter) ; proper vision and proper thought (not hankering after the wealth of others, absence of hatred, belief in rebirth as fruit of good and evil deeds). To these must be added four more : rightful mode of gaining a livelihood, proper exertion, self-control, and cultivation of proper thoughts. This was the most active as well as the most social of creeds, without belief in a personal all-powerful God or ritual of any sort.

6.6. These sects had certain features in common. Each of them had involved considerable mental and physical effort on the part of the first proponent. Even those who preached

that action (*karma*) had merely the visible fruits lived an impressively simple life. Mahāvīra discarded all clothing (though Pārśva had allowed three garments), like Gośāla. He reached his completed doctrine after years of painful asceticism, while squatting on his heels in the blazing sun, in a Licchavi field. The thirty-five year old Buddha abandoned wife and child, along with the life of a Sakyan oligarch, and possibilities of a military or ministerial career at some upstart court, for years of meditation, study, penance, before developing his own system. Asceticism was not their discovery, for even brahmins had the tradition that the simple non-killing food-gatherer's life in the forest was in some way specially meritorious. These new sects brought some practicable conclusions out of that simple life for the whole of a food-producing non-tribal society. There is no point in arguing whether they were Hindu or not; Hinduism came into existence, with the indelible stamp of these sects, only when they had faded many centuries later.

The second common feature shows us why the sects arose, why they were necessary. Without exception, even when the founder was a brahmin like Pūraṇa or Saṃjaya, they actively or passively denied the validity of vedic ritual and observances. In the study of these sects, the finer metaphysical differences are of lesser importance than the background phenomena of tribal life and the monstrous cancer growth of sacrificial ritual in the tribal kingdoms. It is out of these and as a protest against their anti-social features that every one of the sects appeared. The greatest fruit of the *yajña* sacrifice was success in war; fighting was glorified for its own sake as the natural mode of life for kṣatriyas, while the brahmin's duty and means of livelihood was the performance of vedic sacrifices. The other two castes had the task of producing the surplus which priest and warrior took away by natural right, originally for the good of the tribe, but soon for the good of the upper castes. The vedic ritual was formulated in a pastoral age where large herds collectively owned were the main form of property. The new society had gone over to agriculture, so that the slaughter of more and more animals at a growing number of sacrifices meant a much heavier drain upon producer and production. Not only was the number of cattle bred proportionately much less per

head of population but they were now privately owned by clans or families rather than tribes, and more valuable to the agriculturist than to herdsmen. That they were taken as before without compensation meant in effect a heavy tax upon the vaiśya class. Apart from their having less to trade because of this tax, trade and production were both disturbed by the unceasing petty warfare. Even the most passive of the sects above repudiated the use of ritual sacrifice, while the most active like Jainism and Buddhism based themselves upon *ahiṃsā*, "non-killing", as strongly opposed to war as to ritual sacrifice.

Truth, justice, non-stealing, not encroaching upon the possessions of others show that a totally new concept of private, individual property had arisen. In the older traditions, the most valuable property within the tribe (cattle) was held in common, assigned to clans or households by mutual consent; property of strangers was not recognised. The injunction against adultery denotes a rigid concept of family and the passing of group-marriage. Without such a morality, taken for granted today, trade would have been impossible. The staunchest of the Buddha's lay followers were traders; merchants are the prominent element among the Jains to this day. The *ahiṃsā* doctrine first expressed the basic fact that agriculture can support at least ten times the number of people per square mile than a pastoral economy in the same territory. It affected the caste which lived by ritual killing, to the extent of being written prominently into the *Mbh*, though the great epic remains devoted entirely to the glory of *yajñas*, universal conquest, and a murderous civil war fought to mutual annihilation. New gods had to be invented thereafter, because Indra and his vedic fellow-deities had been discredited and went out of fashion with their vedic sacrifices. On the other hand, the new ideology was equally against tribal exclusiveness. Because of good or evil *karma*, a living creature would be reborn; not into a special totem, but into any species particularly suited to and measured by the action, from the vilest insect to a god. Indra was as subject to *karma* as an earthworm. Evil deeds would ultimately cause the fall of Indra from the world of the gods, ultimately to become an animal; the insect could

by good deeds in successive births, be reborn to human and then to divine estate, though even that did not free him from the power of his further *karma*.

Karma therefore was a religious extension of an elementary concept of abstract value, independent of the individual, caste, or tribe. It could grow and ripen like a seed planted in the previous season, or mature like a debt, while it never failed to pay in exact proportion. It can be seen how this would appeal to peasant and trader, even to the *śūdra* who might thus aspire to be reborn a king. Finally, the new religions were at the beginning all much less costly to support than vedic brahminism. The *śramaṇa* monks and ascetics took no part in production, as their creeds forbade them to labour ; but neither did they exercise the least control over the means of production. They were forbidden ownership of houses, fields, cattle, the touch of gold or silver, and trade. The monk lived on alms, which amounted to one doubtful meal a day of soiled food from any hands, or going hungry. Incidentally, the monk thereby broke the commensal tabu retained by tribe and caste. In this he differed from the brahmin's *vānaprastha* retreat to the forest. The brahmin need not even then be a hermit, as he would be accompanied by one or more wives, and a group of disciples ; moreover, he lived in the forest by pasturing cattle, and food-gathering (without taking any life according to the rules that survive). Not only the family but caste and tribe were also renounced by the monk upon ordination, which meant adoption into a quasi-tribal *saṃgha*. His maximum possessions were three cloth garments (preferably stitched from rags), the almsbowl, needle and thread, a razor ; perhaps a bottle of oil and, if he were delicately made, a pair of sandals. He was enjoined to dwell in a rude shelter during the four months of the rainy season, but had to wander on foot the rest of the year to preach the doctrine to new ears. The Buddha himself followed the rule till his death at the age of eighty. His disciples went along new trade routes, even into the tribal wilderness, bearing the message of peace, but coincidentally the influence of Magadhan trade. Because they preached in the people's languages, they lived closer to the people than the brahmin with his monopoly of the obscure vedic Sanskrit. Their

numbers were limited by celibacy and the hard life. The Buddhist Order could not have surpassed a total of 500 monks at the time its founder died, for that is the number reported in the earliest *suttas* ; only in the *Sāmañña-phala sutta* is a greater number given, namely 1250.

In the political field, the new religion was the exact parallel, for the same economic reasons, of the move towards "universal monarchy", the absolute despotism of one as against the endlessly varied tyranny of the many. Social friction was certainly reduced below that caused by the "natural rights" of the four-caste class division, partly because of the new, highly respected class above and beyond all caste, partly because the monks successfully contested brahmin pretensions to innate superiority. It must be remembered that brahmin ritual then served only the kings, nobles, chiefs or richest traders, but had very little use for the common man, in contrast to the later, fully developed brahmin priesthood which performed even the most trifling ritual for anybody, for inconsiderable payment.

In *MN*. 93, the Buddha supposedly told the young brahmin Assalāyaṇa, "Thou hast heard that in Yona, Kamboja and other (adjacent) frontier regions, there are only two castes : Ārya and Dāsa. One having been an Ārya may become a Dāsa, one having been a Dāsa may become an Ārya." The name Yona (Ionia) for some part of Afghanistan proves that this passage could not have been written before Alexander's conquest of the Persian empire. The Buddha does not refer to the Ṛgvedic two-*varṇa* system, for there the Ārya could not become a Dāsa ; Greek slavery is obviously meant. As chattel slavery was negligible in India, whoever wrote the *sutta* could only visualize the Hellenic "free" and "slave" as the castes Ārya and Dāsa ; but it sufficed, to refute the theory that four castes were in some way a law of nature. The Jains admitted caste, even to the theory of new ones arising from a mixture of the original four. There was an attempt to ascribe a brahmin origin to Mahāvīra by a supposed exchange of embryos ; he had the Kaśyapa gotra, so prominent in U.P. of the day, and among "new brahmins" thereafter.

In *DN*. 5, the Buddha narrates the legend of a king Mahā-

vijita advised by his fire-priest to abandon the vedic *yajña*. To gain prosperity for his people, to abolish banditry and thieving, the *purohita* suggested instead that the king should furnish seed to the peasants, capital to the trader, suitable employment for those who wished to serve the state. In this way, all would be busy with their own duties, there would be no revolt, taxes would be promptly collected and the treasury full. This is surely a modern approach to the problem. In another sutta (*DN*.26) the king tries but fails to abolish pilfering, which grew out of poverty, by charity, which only encouraged thieves; then by draconic punishment, which led to armed brigandage, revolt, chaos. So it was not superstition but grasp of contemporary economic reality that led to the ancient Pāli verses: "Cattle are our friends, just as parents and other relatives; for cultivation depends upon them. They give food, strength, freshness of complexion, and happiness. knowing this, brahmins of old did not kill cattle". This makes a strange contrast with the blunt statement by the brahmin Yājñavalkya that he would continue to eat beef, or with Upaniṣad mysticism which tries to explain the inner essence of ritual without abandoning ritual or animal sacrifices. The conservative brahmins persisted in a way of life formed when cultivation was relatively unimportant to the food supply. This way could no longer be practised when the free, open range had been sadly interrupted by ploughed fields which cattle herds could not be allowed to trample except when fallow.

None of the sects fought to abolish all caste from society even though the *śramaṇa* himself renounced caste. Though the Buddhist monastic Order functioned along the lines of a tribal *sabhā* council, the Buddhist precepts were meant for a class society far beyond the tribe, caste, or cult. It must be kept in mind that we are in the presence of the FIRST society divided into classes, linked indissolubly to a new form of production which could not be abolished without increasing that very misery of all human existence which is a recurrent theme of discourse. A famous *gāthā* gave the essence of Buddhism as "showing the cause of those phenomena that arise from a cause, and its negation". That all causation implies negation is the first step in dialectic. Advance to a higher level (by

the "negation of the negation") necessitated far greater progress through more productive types of society than could have been visualized with the rudimentary productive mechanism of the 6th century B.C. The Buddhist *nirvāṇa* now appears to a casual reader like complete annihilation. When first propounded, it was a negation, return of the individual to the signless, undifferentiated state. The condition was to be achieved only by cumulative perfection in successive rebirths, till the personality was freed by its own efforts from subjection to *karma*, the necessity of transmigration. The memory of a classless, undifferentiated society remained as the legend of a golden age (*DN*. 27 ; *cf*. Kalanos in Strabo 15.1.64) when the good earth spontaneously produced ample food without labour because men had neither property nor greed. The transfer from individual to collective, social, cumulative effort, the return of society as a whole to the classless state, on a far higher level of production which would satisfy everyone's needs with as little human effort as the silent forces of nature — this was not visualized till the last century.

6.7. (The section, because of its difficult, technical nature, should be treated as an appendix and may be omitted on a first reading.) Magadha continued to grow steadily after Ajātaśatru. Avanti was taken at some unknown period ; Taxila, the Peshawar region, and a good portion of Afghanistan were conquered by Candragupta, founder of the Mauryan dynasty. A good deal of unminted silver undoubtedly came to India through Taxila. The Greek black ware presumably first entered India from Taxila ; its Indian counterpart ceased at some time during the Sātavāhana period. It is definitely a trade pottery fired by a complicated process in permanent kilns, and probably implies the production of good wines for distant use. Documents speak of Taxila's high cultural position as regards rituals, Sanskrit learning, medicine. The Magadhan court physician Jīvaka had studied at Taxila, as had Candragupta's minister Cāṇakya ; Candragupta himself, Sandracottos (or Andracottos) of the Greek records, was supposed as a boy to have seen Alexander in that region. Pāṇini's grammar was a product of the Taxilan province. The change, from a crucial independent trade-center to a frontier administrative center of

the powerful empire whose capital remained at Patna but which exercised absolute control through a viceroy, ultimately ruined Taxila. It was completed before 305 B.C., perhaps ten years earlier. Nevertheless, a study of coins proves that Magadha enjoyed a special position at Taxila, well before the conquest.

This study,[4] however, has to be conducted by new, rather difficult, logically and mathematically rigorous but purely materialist, scientific methods. A coin is usually characterized by its fabric, alloy, and legend ; the last being the most important makes numismatics a branch of epigraphy. Undated coins are ordered chronologically by negative evidence of being found not earlier than such and such a stratum of the archaeologist's sequence. None of this will work for the unlettered coins of the region and period discussed. The marks were punched on separately by individual punches, which makes them overlap. Oftener than not, only a portion of the mark is visible on any one coin, which means comparison of many specimens. The study of punch-marked coins thus needs patience, superior eyesight, long practice, and a powerful imagination which adepts rarely control. After all this, the coins can be arranged only by groups of heraldic sigla that have no hieroglyphic significance. The problem then is to rank these groups in chronological order. This can be done only by treating numismatics as a science. The main purpose of a coin is not to carry a legend, portrait, or cult-marks but to put into circulation a piece of metal cut to a standard weight. Eevery set of coins, as minted, have variation in weight that is characteristic of the minting technique ; no two specimens have exactly the same weight — on sufficiently accurate balances — even when new. The effect of circulation upon the coins is to wear off a very small amount of the metal at each handling. Again, no two coins would be worn in exactly the same way. For a group of coins, however, the average weight goes down and the variation goes up, both in strict proportion to the time of circulation provided the wear be reasonably uniform. This may be verified by observation on coins of different denomination in actual circulation ; which is not as easy as it sounds, for it takes at least three minutes to weigh each specimen accurately on modern balances. The conclusions given are based upon more

than 12,000 such weighings (made by me) of coins of all periods; of these, about 4000 punch-marked. The evaluation of the data was by modern statistical methods. The straight line which represents falling average weights does not fit at the older end; that is, the very oldest surviving coins of a series are generally overweight. The reason is that the more worn coins tend to change hands more and more rapidly, and either disappear from circulation or are too worn to be placed in their proper group; those survivors that can be allocated to a group have therefore not circulated in proportion to their age.

To apply these principles, a set of conditions have to be satisfied. The coins must have been cut with sufficient accuracy at the beginning so that their initial variation is not much greater than the changes caused by circulation. This excludes copper, pewter, and even billon coins of the ancient periods; for machine fabrication only the pies (not in common circulation) need be excluded. Again, the circulation must be regular enough to have the proper effect, which excludes gold coins in general, almost always hoarded with the minimum handling, but liable also to be clipped or, in India, rubbed on the touchstone. Finally, the groups must have sufficiently large numbers with comparable history, i.e. should be members of the same hoard. For example, a coin of Menander turned up in the Poona bazar, in circulation in 1942; its history could not be compared to that, say, of the Menander coin found in Wales (*IA*. 34, 1905, p. 252) along with Roman specimens, or any dug up in the Punjab. This is not an unusual case. Before the first world war, coins of all countries and denominations were accepted in remoter villages at the value of the nearest Indian coin of similar appearance; in addition, the thick, cast pre-British coins, and cowry shells also circulated, though not legal tender. The hoard must be reasonably well-preserved, or encrustations will cause an uneven change of weight that might disguise the loss due to circulation. If the soil be damp, as happens in India oftener than not, centuries of burial will slowly draw the copper of the alloy to the surface, leaving spongy silver behind. This 'decuprification' is well known in other countries. Indian numismatists proceed to strip it off on the technically impossi-

ble supposition that molten copper had been poured on to the silver coin to bring up the weight. The findings of many hoards may be collated by the relative positions of the coins common to more than one hoard. This still remains difficult in India, simply because the authorities in possession seem unable either to arrange for accurate publication of both description and weight, or to allow the coins to be studied by others. Under these circumstances, the reader must excuse a lengthy exposition of the new technique which applies to all hoards.

The most important of these hoards was found in 1924 at Taxila, in the Bhir mound. Its coins were very well preserved by the dry soil and the added protection of the bronze jar of about a litre capacity in which the hoard had been deposited. It was possible to date the hoard approximately by two coins of Alexander, and one of his demented half-brother and brief successor, Philip Arrhidaios. As the latter issued few coins, Taxila was far from his actual domain, and the specimen is in mint condition, the dangerous assumption may be justified that the coin was deposited soon after issue. The hoard is thus dated at about 317 B.C., when Arrhidaios was taken prisoner and assassinated. There was one Daric of the Persian empire (which had included Taxila, at least in name), 79 bits of local small change, and 33 bent-bar coins of the local standard and markings. When these are removed, there still remain 1059 punch-marked coins of the type found with great profusion in Magadha and wherever Magadhan influence penetrated. These are of the Mohenjo-dāro class 'D' weight (about 54 grains); that is, 95% of the coins fall into the same range of variation in weight as do the accurately cut and very well-preserved 'D' class stone weights found in the Indus city excavations. The standard accords very well with the 32-*raktikā* weight of the traditional *kārṣāpaṇa*.

Though the *kārṣāpaṇas* have a battered appearance because of the system of punching on individual marks separately, they are remarkably well made, superior to almost all later coinage in the essentials. Their alloy is fine, while their weights were about as carefully adjusted as were those of pre-war British Indian minted rupees. This makes it much easier to detect the effect of circulation, hence to arrange the coins in order of time.

Another remarkable feature helps chronological arrangement. The punch-marks on the 'heads' and 'tails' are independent systems. The obverse (heads) contains regularly five marks, whereof each four-mark group represents a king, the 'fifth' mark that of the issuing authority, crown prince, minister, provincial governor, or the like. Of the four marks, the first is a 'sun-symbol' common to all such coins. The second is described as a six-spoked wheel, though the spokes project beyond the rim and terminate in strange 'points'; the particular form of six-pointed wheel seems to characterize a dynasty. The third mark often goes with the six-pointed wheel, so that the fourth is really the king's seal. For Asoka, this is the "caduceus." These are the only coins that have been or can be attributed to the great emperor. This incidentally explains the two Asokas of Buddhist tradition, for an earlier but decidedly lesser ruler in the Taxila hoard has a very similar mark (fig. 23). The people of the Asokan age, when the Pāli records were first gathered together, regularly saw both sets of coins in circulation, but knew that the older was not their present ruler the pious Asoka (Dhammāsoka), hence the other would be called Kālāsoka ['the ancient Asoka', or the 'black' (non-Buddhist) Asoka]; it is thus that his name is recorded. The fifth mark often appears as the 'fourth' in another group, as we should expect from a father-son relationship. In two or three cases, the coins of an older group are re-issued by a later monarch, who just stamps his own obverse marks on them. This corresponds to a violent change of dynasty, and is attested in the historical period by the coins of Nahapāna in the Joghaḷṭembhī hoard being reissued stamped on the other side with an obverse of his conqueror Śātakarṇi.

It might be thought that this equipment enables one to solve the coinage problem, by ascribing the coins (in order) to the names in the king-lists. The trouble with this is the unsatisfactory nature of the records. The brahmin, Jain, and Buddhist documents give different names for the same king, or different lists. The Buddhist Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna traditions also differ among themselves. In general, as would be expected from the relative importance of the three sects, the Pāli Buddhist annals, though unsatisfactory, seem to agree best with the

coinage. In any case, the names should be taken as conjecturally assigned to the coins. The purāṇas call the whole Magadhan dynasty (from Bimbisāra down) Śiśunāga. The name means among other things 'earthworm', a mark not to be found on the coins. The *-nāga* termination of the name has passed without comment; at this early period, it is certainly not in the vedic Aryan tradition, hence might show tribal connections, just like the Mātaṅgas in Kosala. The Buddhists know nothing of



Fig. 22. Punch-marks of Śiśunāga (?).

Śiśunāga as Bimbisāra's father, but the fifth in line after the parricide Ajātaśatru was removed by the people, whose revolt put on the throne an *amātya* (governor) named Susunāga, the Pāli form of Śiśunāga. This is reflected by restruck coins with a dynastic mark of a pup (*śiśu*). The puppy reappears on top of five arches which represent a mountain in almost all heraldry, and might also be 'heaven' here. There are several other such animal or tree marks on 'arches', obviously clan-marks ("totems"), marks of descent; the dynasty would be 'descen-

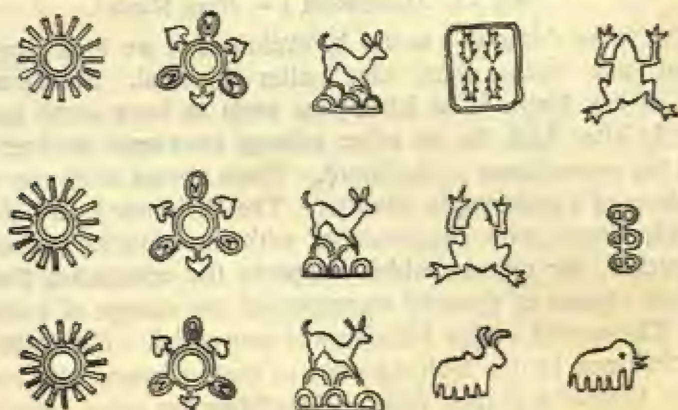


Fig. 23. Main Śiśunāga royal coinages. The first two show the father-son relationship. The last is the most prolific single pre-Mauryan issue (? Mahānandin).

dants of *śiśu*'. The Mauryans have once a peacock on arches, their name *morīya* meaning 'of the peacock'. The general Mauryan imperial mark of the crescent-on-arches tallies with the puranic ascription of the Mauryans to the lunar race and is found on the Sohgaura copper plate (fig. 34). A Śiśunāga king whose name (from his personal seal of the humped bull) may be Nandin (last of fig. 23) has as many as 391 coins of the hoard, far more than anyone else. He is succeeded by one who changes the clan-mark on his 102 coins, being descended

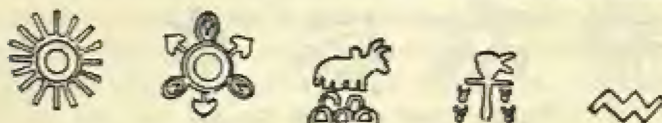


Fig. 24. Punch-marks of Nandin or Nanda, peaceful successor of the Śiśunāgas.

from the *nandi* (fig. 24) ; the same dynastic *cakra* is retained. There follows a single ruler, with a different *cakra* on about 150 coins, who would be Mahāpadma Nanda (fig. 25). The legend



Fig. 25. Mahāpadma (= Nava Nanda).

of the 'nine Nandas', would be explained if we took *nava* to mean 'new' rather than 'nine', after Jayaswal. Mahāpadma was of low birth. The Mauryans seem to have come immediately after him, for no other coinage intervenes between his and the newest issue in the hoard. These newest coins can only be those of Candragupta Maurya. The Peshāwar hoard shows Mahāpadma's coins counterstruck with the Mauryan crescent-on-arches, for reissue, which supports the conclusion that a violent change of dynasty accompanied the change of coinage.

The wealth of the Nandas was proverbial. The tradition is confirmed by the high standard of their coinage, with richer alloy, thinner and finer fabric. The Mauryan coins (after the first ruler) show a far greater pressure upon the currency, reflected by a heavier debasement (copper more than half the alloy !), and much cruder initial weighing. During the second

world war, the same phenomenon could be noticed with British Indian coins, which were successively of cheaper and cheaper metal, with decidedly more variation in minted weight, though supplemented by a flood of paper currency. The difference between the Mauryan and pre-Mauryan coins is manifested by comparison of the hoard with another of 183 Mauryan punch-marked coins found also in the Bhir mound, approximately dated by a fresh coin of Diodotos to about 248 B.C.

The reverse (tails) marks are far more interesting in their own way. Pre-Mauryan coins were issued without any reverse

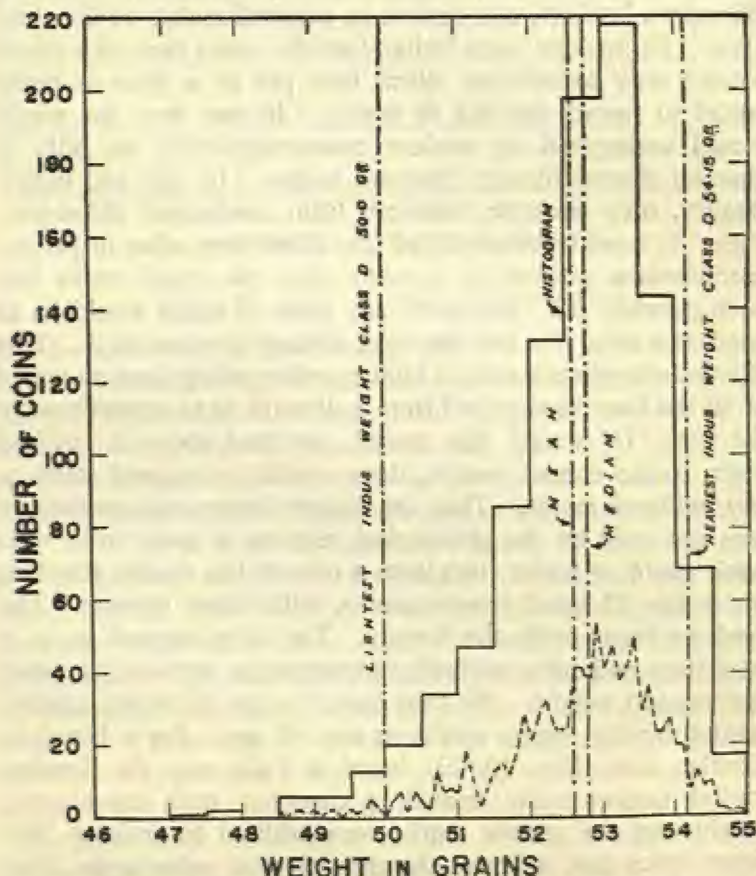


Fig. 26. Weight distribution of silver punch-marked coins from the Taxila hoard, and comparison with Indus "class D" stone weights.

marks at all, many being found with blank reverse. These marks are much smaller than on the obverse, not to be grouped into fixed sets, and far more in number than the obverse. If one ignores the 'heads' and merely groups the coins by the number of marks on the reverse, then the remarkable fact emerges that the average weight goes down regularly (fig. 27) with the increase in number of reverse marks. The correlation is exactly the same as with pre-war British Indian rupees and their dates. Now these reverse marks are found even on Persian coins from the Levant, so they could not have been Magadhan, nor royal. They seem to belong to traders, who were financiers, bankers, and dealers in precious metals at the same time. To this day, such Indian 'shroffs' have their own marks known only to initiates, which they put on a piece of tested metal to record the fact of testing. In our case, the marks would correspond to modern countersignatures on bills or cheques cleared through business houses. In size and individuality, they resemble American train conductors' ticket-punches. It must be remembered that coins were often of private manufacture, allowed to circulate after the royal marks had been punched on. Moreover, any piece of metal would be as good as a coin, if it had the right amount of silver in it. This is seen from pieces found at Mohenjo-dāro which have no marks at all but have been cut off from a silver plate to approximately the class 'D' weight (54 grains), but just above it; rubbed down to the correct weight, these would be as good coins as any, without marks. That the traders began such coinage is seen not only by the philological relation of *paṇa*=coin with *paṇi, vaṇik* = trader, but from a coin of the double standard which has 13 small reverse marks, with blank obverse. The marking began with the traders. The king stepped in at a later stage as issuing authority whose marks were to guarantee fineness and weight. We thus have the loss of weight supplemented by the reverse marks as sign of age. For a hoard of Kosalan coins (figs. 19, 20) found at Paila near the Kosalan capital (rather badly treated in cleaning) both the average weight and the reverse marks were utilized to make a new linear index that indicates the chronological order better than either could have done. The accompanying figures (figs. 19-25)

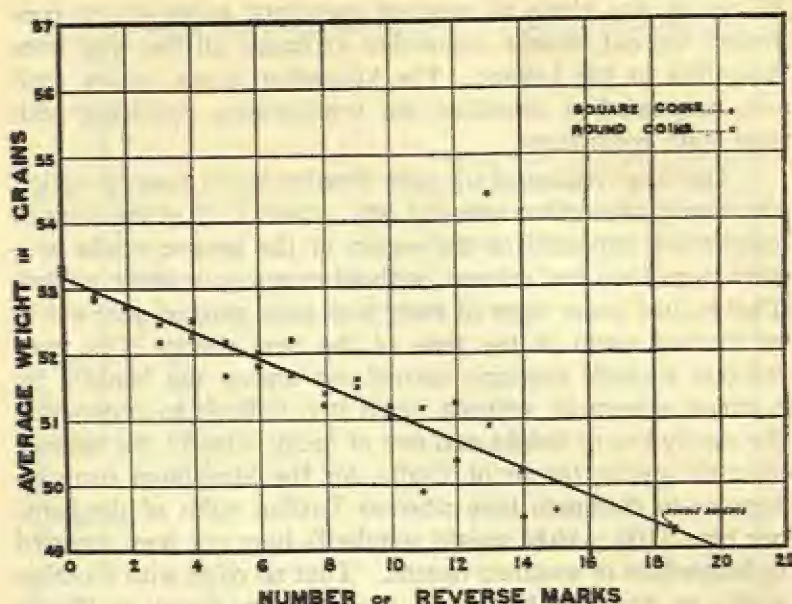


Fig. 27. Loss of weight per reverse mark.

give the main chronological arrangement for Kosalan and Magadhan sample coinages. The Magadhan had a greater variety due to fifth marks, the Kosalan having a simpler four-mark coinage of the 3/4 'D' standard (40½ grains). They also show one violent and one peaceful change of dynasty. The principal issue of each Magadhan king seems to have had the fifth mark as that of an elephant. Later, in the Mauryan period, we find coins with the emperor's personal and fifth marks but the first three marks of the Mauryan dynasty replaced by three small homo-signs. No such coins are found in the earlier Taxilan hoard, though powerful tribes reduced by Alexander had acted as buffer states towards expanding Magadha. These can be interpreted as tribal coinages issued under the suzerainty of the emperor. The reverse-mark system disappears in the Mauryan period, the coins being issued with a single royal mark on the reverse. The normal absence of any further marks is to be explained by the rise of the vast new volume of trade in new territory opened to the south, unres-

tricted by the chain of northern merchant guilds which controlled the old, steady commodity exchange all the way from Magadha to the Levant. The Magadhan kings, as we shall see, suspended or cancelled old trading-class privileges with new state restrictions.

One more feature of the older Taxilan hoard deserves notice, the steady absorption rate (fig. 28). About 7/10 of the coins in circulation remained in the region of the reverse marks system once they had entered, without escaping or being melted. That is, just under three of every four coins marked once would be marked again at the time of the next check. This may indicate periodic checking carried out among the bankers by common agreement, without which it is difficult to understand the steady loss of weight and rate of decay. Clearly, the balance of trade was in favour of Taxila, for the Magadhan currency appears to dominate here whereas Taxilan coins of the bent-bar type (100 *raktikā* weight standard) have not been reported in Magadhan or southern hoards. That no coins with Kosalan marks or the 3/4 *kārṣāpaṇa* standard are found at Taxila proves (besides inadequate digging) that Kosala had long disappeared from the scene. With the settlement of the Ganges valley, mainly along the river once the forests had been cleared, the older trade-route near the Himālayan foot-hills would lose its importance ; in other words, Kosala was doomed even without military action, as the comparatively poorer quality of its coinage would confirm.

Magadhan coins and the traders that brought them must have been accompanied by a thin trickle of monks who bore the new doctrine of peace, brotherhood, easing of tension between men of all classes. Some of these, members of the 'Sakyan monastic community' dressed in *kāṣāya* (still famous as Banāras *katthai*) red togas brought the name and words of the Buddha. The new teaching could not have struck deep roots before Candragupta's Magadhan armies swept away the few remaining tribal buffer states of the east Punjab, the new Macedonian garrisons left by Alexander, and the counterattacks of Seleukos Nikator, who formally ceded the frontier provinces. The new government at Patna appointed a viceroy for Taxila and introduced rigid controls that nearly strangled the long-established

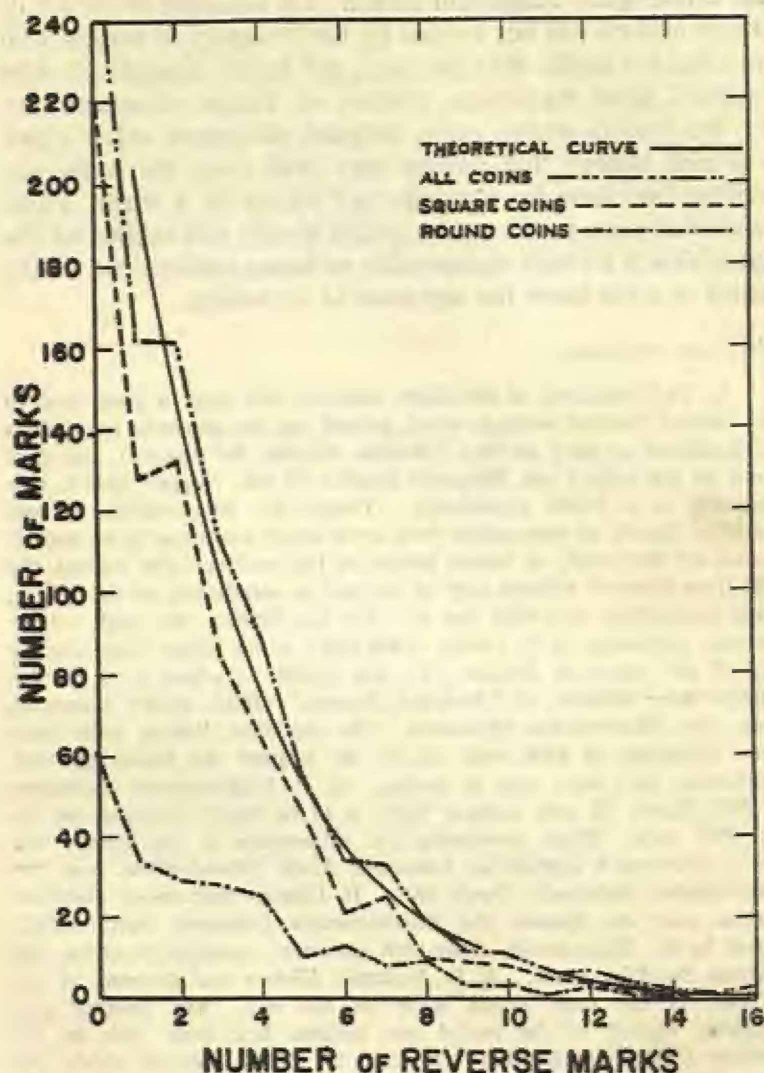


Fig. 28. Absorption rate of pre-Mauryan currency at Taxila.

trade, as shown in the next chapter. Within a generation after Alexander's raid, the economic position of Taxila was drastically impaired, never again to be fully restored. It may well be that the older Taxilan hoard was buried in anticipation of

the catastrophic Magadhan attack. Its principal moral for us is that history was not written by the vainglory of princes who punched the marks onto the coins, nor by the hierophants who designed those mysterious symbols of Tantric character, nor by the traders whose guilds adopted the secret cultic signs. The real history that anyone may read from the coins was written into them by contemporary society as a whole, which fabricated them to accurate standard weight and rubbed off the metal slowly through innumerable exchange transactions. Every hoard of coins bears the signature of its society.

Notes and references.

1. The treatment of Buddhism followed here owes a great deal to my father's Marāṭhi writings which pointed out the economic foundations of Buddhism as early as 1913 (*Buddha, dharma, āṇi saṃgha*) ; his final work on the subject was *Bhagavān Buddha* (2 vol., Nagpur, 1940-1, now available in a Hindi translation). Though his interpretation of pre-Buddhist history as rationalized from myth leaves something to be desired, I owe my first study of Indian history to his teaching. For sources, the Pāli Text Society's editions may be accepted as satisfactory on the whole, their translations somewhat less so. For the *Jātakas*, the seven volume German translation of J. Dutoit (1906-1921) is far better than that by Cowell and others in English. To this should be added E. S. Burlingame's three volumes of '*Buddhist Legends*' (*HOS.* 28-30) translated from the *Dhammapada-Aṭṭhakathā.* The Buddhist Vinaya texts have been translated in *SBE.* vols. 13, 17, 20, whereof the *Mahāvagga* and *Cullavagga* have been used in passing. G. P. Malalasekera's *Dictionary of Pāli Names* (2 vols. London 1938) is to be highly recommended for the Pāli texts. Those questioning the authenticity of the legends will like J. Przyluski's *Légende de l'empereur Aśoka* (*Aśokāvadāna*, from the Sino-Tibetan tradition) : Paris 1923. H Lüder's posthumous *Beobachtungen über die Sprache des Buddhistischen Urkanons* (Berlin 1954), edited by E. Waldschmidt, deals with important questions regarding the original Buddhist canon. A. L. Basham's *History and doctrines of the Ājīvikas* is the most recent study of the sect. The political and economic history of the period was perhaps first dealt with in my *Ancient Kosala and Magadha JBBRAS.* 27 (1952) 180–213 which also covers the subject matter of the next chapter.

2. The identification of Sibi with Shorkoṭ was made from local finds by J. Ph. Vogel, *EI.* 16(1921) 15-17.

3. My article on Kosala and Magadha above covers these points. Details about the Sakyan *gotra* are given in *Brahmin Clans* (*JAOS.* vol. 73, No. 4, 1953).

4. For punch-marked coins, the basic paper is my *Study and metrology of silver punch-marked coins* [*New Indian Antiquary* 4, (1941), 1-35; 49-76]. Summaries with later information but not the method are given in *JBBRAS.* 24-5, (1948-9) 33-47; 27, (1952) 261-271, for the Magadhan and the Kosalan (Paila Hoard) coins respectively. The test of the mathematical theory and its statistical application was published in my note on *The effect of circulation upon the weight of metallic currency* (*Current Science*, Bangalore, 1942; vol. 11, pp. 227-230), which establishes the method for numismatics, as a science. I have changed my evaluations of the *Arth.* after the paper first cited was written.

CHAPTER VII

THE FORMATION OF A VILLAGE ECONOMY

THE last three chapters drift away from the definition of history given at the beginning of this work. The reader may be lost in the text-critical morass presented by tenuous legendary material uncollated with archaeology. The fact is clear that Magadha emerged as the dominant Gangetic state, ruining alike petty vedic kingdoms, Aryan tribes neither known to nor following the vedas, and aborigines not yet Aryanized. What has to be brought out is the mechanism involved, which meant a tremendous increase of population on land newly cleared of forest. The virtually self-sufficient village sprouted here for the first time as the basic unit of production, which would later spread over and characterize the whole of India. The first major village settlement was promoted directly under state control, which fought a deadly struggle with private enterprise, especially the trader. The Indian merchant class therefore appears to remain silent in history till the twentieth century. Yet the new economy likewise cracked the foundations of a centralized state power. Such important phenomena have to be set into a chronological

frame-work. This means some attention to formal history, which suddenly becomes possible with the Mauryans. The first decipherable inscriptions, many archaeological relics, Buddhist and Jain tradition, the *Arthaśāstra*, Alexander's raid with its byproduct of Greek documents, add up to a respectable mass of source material. Rather than happily chew the same endless cud with scholarly historians, let us pass the major events and sources in review to derive the main driving force of Magadhan expansion, investigate the pressure behind Asoka's conversion to Buddhism, see why the collapse of a central power then became inevitable. It was the Mauryan empire which gave the country its later political unity, and the state its theoretical absolute power. In its own way, it corresponds to the Roman empire in Europe.

7.1. The king of Taxila[1] submitted to Alexander in 327 B.C. The next year saw the defeat of Pôros followed by the revolt of Alexander's soldiers on the Beās river. The Macedonian host retreated westwards, then down the Indus. Their leader died at Babylon in 323 B.C. Candragupta Maurya's accession is placed somewhere about 320 B.C. His ancestors, the Mauryans of Pipphalivana ('sacred fig-tree forest') had received the cinders of the Buddha's funeral pyre. This may be a legend invented to flatter the ruling house when the Buddhist records were compiled, for the tribe was otherwise not known. In the years 305-304, Seleukos Nikator tried to recapture the lost frontier provinces but was repulsed and came to terms with Candragupta. There seems to have been some sort of a marriage alliance as well as treaty; the 500 elephants given to Seleukos helped him win the battle of Ipsus next year. Candragupta's son Bindusāra succeeded about the year 297 B.C.; of his reign which terminated about 273 B.C., there are very few notices. The Greeks report a king Amitrochates, who might be this person, while Indians state that the great brahmin minister Cāṇakya who had placed Candragupta upon the throne retired during the son's rule. Bindusāra's son Asoka succeeded, was crowned four years after the father's death, and brings us suddenly into Indian history proper by his numerous, extraordinary inscriptions. The long reign which ended about 227 B.C. marked funda-

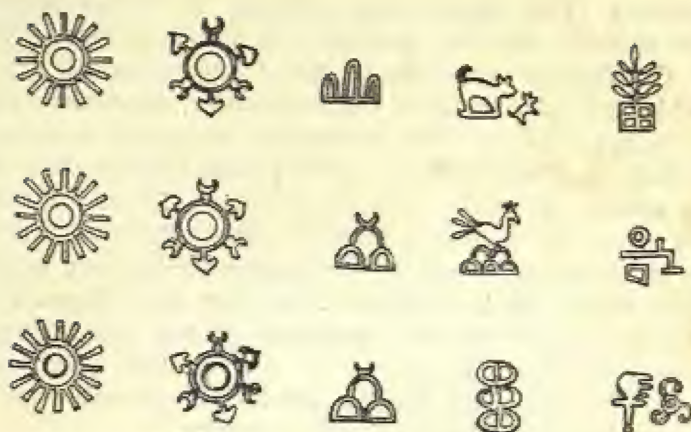


Fig. 29. Candragupta, Bindusāra, Asoka.

mental changes all over the country, whose manifestation was Asoka's support of the Buddhist doctrine as well as similar Magadhan sects.

Candragupta's armies penetrated the deep south, certainly into Mysore state, which belonged to Asoka's domains without any notice of his or his father's having campaigned there. The Vamba Moriyar[3] of ancient Tamil poetry may refer to a Mauryan army which had virtually reached Madurā before being driven back, or stopped by a mountain which their chariots could not pass. The uncertain casual reference dates from the 2nd century A.D. The Mauryan empire was thus the first real 'universal monarchy' over the whole country. Asoka undertook only one campaign, an extremely bloody one against Kaliṅga (Orissa), after which his influence penetrated without the help of arms, far across the frontiers. During his reign, new powers arose in the south. His grandson and successor Daśaratha was the first of the nonentities that ended the dynasty. The traditional number of Mauryan emperors from Candragupta is ten, though the final names are variously reported. There are not more than ten five-mark groups in Mauryan punch-marked coins. The last Mauryan emperor Bṛhadratha was killed by his general Puṣyamitra at an army review. The last descendant of Asoka, Pūrṇavarman, feudatory

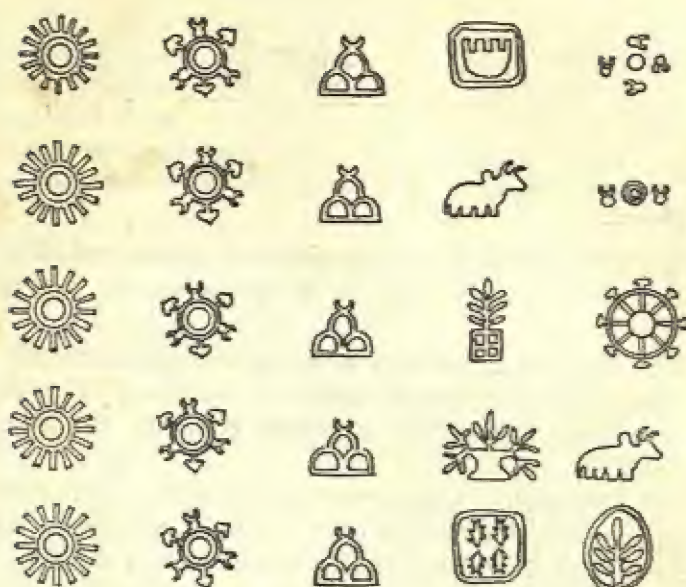


Fig. 30. Mauryan successors of Asoka.

king of Magadha, replanted the sacred tree at Buddha Gayā in the early 7th century A.D. (*Beal* 2.118). The Mauryan name survived locally for centuries afterwards in many little pockets[3] whose trifling chieftains claimed such distinguished origin. It has been claimed that the Candrarão More of Mahārāṣṭra may be (nominal) descendants of Candragupta Maurya! From our point of view, it is most important to note that in spite of, or because of, the greatly extended domain, coins not later than the reign of Asoka are heavily debased, containing decidedly more copper than silver. With Puṣyamitra, whose Śuṅga ('fig-tree') dynasty kept the title *senāpati* (commander-in-chief), the first Indian cast coins appear. The punch-marked system went out of fashion though the coins circulated for centuries afterwards, particularly in the south. The Śuṅga empire was in retreat before many invaders, Greeks among them. The capital seems to have been Vidiśā (Besnagar), though Ujjain could not have lost its importance. No empire comparable to the Mauryan appeared till the



Fig 31. 5 obverse and reverse punch-marks on late southern "Mauryan" silver coins from the Bodenāyakanūr hoard.

Gupta period, say 320 A.D., though the Kuṣāṇas and Sātavāhanas showed a bright patch of prosperity in the dark interval.

The rise and decay of a great empire, not succeeded by any other, indicate profound changes of the basis. This must be developed, to show the advantage given by our present approach.

7.2. Plutarch's Alexander[4] may be taken as a sample text upon which our method casts a somewhat different light. "The extent of King Taxiles's dominions in India was thought to be as large as Egypt, abounding in good pastures, and producing beautiful fruits". The size is ridiculously magnified; Taxiles could not hold out against Pôros. The special mention of pasturage is noteworthy; the Greek booty before Taxila consisted mostly of vast herds of cattle, the measure of wealth since vedic times. There is nothing said of Taxilan agriculture. The king spoke thus to Alexander: "To what purpose should we make war upon one another, if the design of your coming into these parts be not to rob us of our water or necessary food...". The water is not a mere figure of speech, as Aryans had fought over it since the Ṛgveda. If Alexander had no intention of diverting the water, there would be nothing to fight for. Alexander's generosity towards the Taxilan king was not a personal matter but the settled policy towards all trade centres of no military value.

"But the best soldiers of the Indians now entering into the pay of several of the cities (near Taxila), undertook to defend them, and did it so bravely that they put Alexander to a great deal of trouble, till at last, after a capitulation, upon surrender of the place, he fell upon them as they were marching away, and put them all to the sword. This one breach of his word remains as a blemish upon his achievements in war".

Alexander could not afford to leave professional fighters behind him who might garrison centers of resistance. The tribeless kṣatriyas who could take military service with any city are a new factor in a region where some Ṛgvedic tribes still retained their original manners and territory. The complete inconsequence of tribal policy — as with medieval Rajpūts — made it a simple matter to reduce their strongholds one by one, when the populations concentrated there to resist the invader. The extra-tribal fighter, on the other hand, was a permanent danger. "Nor was he (Alexander) less incommoded by the Indian philosophers, who inveighed against those princes who joined his party, and solicited the free nations to oppose him. He took several of these also and caused them to be hanged". Here, philosophers means brahmins, not the ascetics with whom they were regularly classed. The brahmin, for all that has deservedly been said against him for promoting the superstition upon which he fed, was a link between tribes, the one class that might think of a society beyond the tribe. At this stage, there were still brahmins within the tribes, in the Punjab, while they had already become a tribeless caste in the east. The ascetic renounced tribe and caste as well as family and property.

Description of the fight with the last Pūru king (which Plutarch claimed to have read from Alexander's own letters) distracts attention from its striking consequence :

" But this combat with Pôros took the edge off the Macedonians' courage, and stayed their further progress in India. For having found it hard enough to defeat an enemy who brought but twenty thousand foot and two thousand horse into the field, they thought they had reason to oppose Alexander's design of leading them on to pass the Ganges, too, which they were told was thirty-two furlongs broad and a hundred fathoms deep, and the banks on the further side covered with multitudes of enemies. For they were told the kings of the Gangaridans and Praesians (*prācya*, 'easterners') expected them there with eighty thousand horse, two hundred thousand foot, eight thousand armed chariots, and six thousand fighting elephants. Nor was this a mere vain report, spread to discourage them. For Androcottos (Candragupta), who not long afterwards reigned in those parts, made a present of five hundred elephants all at once to Seleucus, and with an army of six hundred thousand men subdued all India."

The width of the Ganges was not exaggerated for it could be that broad in the rainy season, which had already begun. The Greek victory was in part due to the traditional Indian religious interdict against travel or campaign in the monsoon. Crossing Indian rivers in force was difficult even when unopposed, as Ahmad Shah Durrani found out over two thousand years later by losing half his army in the Jumna; the Marāthās, who neglected to oppose the passage, thereby threw away the battle of Pānipat and their last chances of empire. The Pūru chariots failed against the Greek cavalry, which was superior also to the Indian horsemen. The elephants, properly handled, could have won the fight, but combined operations against so mobile and experienced an opponent meant deeper tactical knowledge than could then have been developed in tribal Punjab. The one arm that could have countered any Greek attack was the archers, again not properly utilized (as for example by the Parthians against Crassus) and much less effective in the monsoon rain. The Indian bow was six feet long; *dhanu*=bow is synonymous with the fathom measure. Arrian noted (*Indika* 16; *Meg.* 225) that nothing could resist the shot of the Indian archer, whose long arrow passed through shield and breast-plate together. This was Alexander's personal experience, for a Mallian arrow with head three fingers broad and four long penetrated the cuirass, lodged in the conqueror's rib, and was removed with the utmost difficulty. This was the hero's most serious injury. The considerable army of the Gangaridans meant something else than the unwieldy Persian host at the little stream of the Granicus. It could be supplied in the field only by the river route, so the Ganges would have been well defended.

Alexander met another group of Indians, classed as 'philosophers', the brahmins and "gymnosophist" *śramaṇa* ascetics. A collective interview with eight is recorded by Plutarch, of which two answers seem worth noting : "He bade the fourth tell him what arguments he used to Sabbas to persuade him to revolt. 'No other', said he, 'than that he should either live or die nobly' ". This man was undoubtedly a brahmin; the sentiment is met again in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.37). The Magadhan king, bards, and priests similarly ex-

horted soldiers before the battle (*Arth.* 10.3). "The eighth told him, 'Life is more powerful than death, because it supports so many miseries' ". This has the genuine ascetic ring of contemporary Gangetic philosophy, that visualized life as misery — which it undoubtedly was for most. Onesicritus, disciple of Diogenes the dog-man (cynic ; but the recorded behaviour of Diogenes, though queer enough, could not be called a dog-*vrata*) was sent to investgate the leading teachers of the region. One of them commanded him to appear before him naked, if he wished to receive instruction (also, Strabo 15.1.64). This was interpreted as pure insolence, but indicates merely that the teacher belonged to a naked sect like that of the Ājīvikas or the newer Jains. It is taken for granted that Alexander saw nothing but the usual fakirs whom all intruders have seen after him. Yet these sects could not have arisen before the 6th century B.C., while it is difficult to conceive that they arose independently in the Punjab. The philosophy Alexander met at Taxila bore the Magadhan stamp no less unmistakably than the silver coins received by him in tribute from the king of Taxila. What he did not encounter was the Magadhan army.

The element of the fantastic which enters all Greek reports of India makes the underlying reality difficult to evaluate unless the context is known. From the Greek point of view, India WAS a fantastic country, with rivers before which their own seemed trickling rivulets, a magic soil that gave two, or even three bumper harvests a year. After all, the elephant is a fantastic creature even to Indians. Wool grew on trees — though the Indians saw nothing strange in cotton! In the Indian reed which had honey-sweet sap, one recognizes sugarcane ; the Greeks did not associate it with the "stones the colour of frankincense, sweeter than figs or honey" (Strabo 15.1.37; *Meg.* 54) — their first experience of rock sugar. The Indians made their contracts by word of mouth, and kept them honestly: "but indeed no Indian is (ever) accused of lying", (*Meg.* 217). No state and very few individuals in Greece could claim this honesty at any period of their known history. Endless legal quibbles were a daily judiciary task of the Hellenic city-state, while the contempt accorded to the

Graeculus esuriens by classical antiquity was fully merited.

The account Megasthenes gave of the Indian caste system also survived because it was extraordinary to the Greek eye. There were seven distinct classes (*genea*, or *meros*) between which custom and law forbade intermarriage. They were in order : 1) the philosophers, brahmins as well as ascetic gymnosophists; 2) husbandmen cultivators, called *georgoi*; 3) herdsmen-hunters; 4) artizans and retail merchants; 5) fighting men; 6) overseers or superintendents who reported on all actions of the people to the king, or to the magistrates of the free cities; 7) the great assessors-councillors who determined policy, officered the armed forces, administered justice, regulated all affairs of state. This does not tally with the traditional Indian four-caste system, so is used to discredit Megasthenes, without a glance at the circumstances. It is clear that the envoy reported upon the Magadhan organization, which ruled over the country. Alexander saw no such caste-classes in the Punjab, having met only the tribal priest, ascetic, and warrior. Megasthenes does not report from Indian *śāstra* books (as did Albirūni 1300 years after him) but describes what he saw. About the first class, (the only one not closed to recruits from any other) there is no question ; the *śramaṇa* and brahmin were bracketed together even in the Asokan edicts, receiving equal respect. The *śramaṇa* was a celibate who did not propagate his kind, while the brahmin underwent a training as rigorous as that of most ascetics till the age of thirty-five, according to Megasthenes. Moreover, both had special claims to sanctity, so the grouping into one caste is not unjustified. The third class, described as tented nomads, were the surviving vrātya tribes, Aryan, Aryanized, commingling with society, or *śreṇī guilds*, not savages apart. The tribe *jana* tended now to become a community, *gaṇa*. The fighting men of class 5 are obviously the kṣatriyas. The question remains about the rest. It will be shown later that handicraft production had not as yet moved to the villages. One class (no. 4) produced commodities in cities and transported them for sale over the countryside; that they formed or seemed to form a (*vaiśya*) caste would therefore be most likely. The two bureaucratic groups, 6 and 7, the latter recruited specially from

leading citizens, would again become castes, in a country where class had emerged in the guise of caste as a new method of grouping separate components into a society. The later kāyastha caste was formed out of people with diverse origins, precisely in the same manner. The kāyasthas were originally record-keepers for the kingdom. The caste may have begun its formation from Mauryan days, when its functions arose, though the word is not known in the 3rd century B.C. The higher councillors would claim superiority; there were enough of them to form a caste by themselves. The existence of a vast salaried officialdom is demonstrated by the close agreement of Megasthenes with the *Arthaśāstra* on this vital point. The *rajjukas, mahāmātyas, dūtas* formed these two castes, by professional exclusiveness. That these castes vanished shows how closely they were bound to a particular form of state.

There remains class 2, the *georgoi*, equated to the vaiśyas as the usual Sanskrit equivalent of 'husbandman'. Unfortunately, Megasthenes was not compiling a dictionary of usual Sanskrit. The class is very carefully described: They formed by far the greatest part* of the population. They produced almost all the surplus food, with trifling additions from the herdsman-hunter; no other caste produced any food at all. They never entered the cities, never bore arms, were 'exempted from military duties', continued to plough their fields within sight of armies that fought for mastery over land and cultivator. This does not describe the vaiśya (who had still the right to bear arms and to hold office), but the śūdra who was carefully disarmed, had part neither in the armed forces nor the state machinery, nor possessed ownership rights in the means of production. If the vaiśya fits anywhere in the scheme described by Megasthenes, it is in class 4. The statement that all land belonged to the king or the free cities, with a tribute not less than a quarter of the total crop paid by

* Arrian, *Indika* xi : Secundum genus hominum post sophistas sunt agricolae, qui quidem numero reliquas Indorum tribus longe superant. Hi neque arma habent, quibus in bello utantur, neque bellicas res curant ; sed arbores colunt, et regibus liberisque urbibus tributa pedunt. This contrasts with the misleading sentimentality of Diodorus, for clearly these agricolae were disarmed, not philosophers who rejected warfare.

these seemingly idyllic *georgoi* to the officials or city magistrates, bears out completely this equation to the śūdra. There is no statement in the Alexander story about the land belonging to anyone. On the other hand, Plutarch's *Alexander* also mentions the free cities. These were simply the headquarters of former or current tribal settlements, whose citizens appear as the *paura-jānapada* in the epics and the *Arthaśāstra*. They vanished from the country before the Gupta period, though the compound still occurs in Rudradāman's Girnār inscription (A.D. 150). It may be suggested that the homo-sign coinages of the Mauryan period (fig. 32) belong to the tribal 'free cities'



Fig. 32. Punch-marks on *janapada* coins under suzerainty of Bindusāra and Asoka.

under the emperor. The *paura-jānapadas* had not the right, or perhaps not the wealth, to issue such coins in pre-Mauryan days, when the Magadhan kings systematically carried out the reduction of cities and destruction of tribal armies. Much the same demolition was accomplished by Alexander. This left the progress of class society unimpeded by tribal rights and tribal obligations (beyond some outward forms), with the brahmins now free to find new tribes or to take up new occupations. They did both, as the record shows.

Patna was the greatest city in the world at the time of Megasthenes, far beyond anything the Greeks had built, or could have achieved themselves. The stockades and towers he described have been found in the waterlogged suburbs of Patna-Bankipore. That such a capital and its empire could be erected without slaves naturally impressed the western observers as the

most fantastic of all Indian characteristics. Arrian (*Indika* 10; *Meg.* 210) quoted Megasthenes :

"All the Indians are free and not one of them is a slave. The Lakedemonians and the Indians here so far agree. The Lakedemonians, however, hold the Helots as slaves, and these Helots do servile labour; but the Indians do not even use aliens as slaves, and much less a countryman of their own".

Parenthetically, the mention of helotage is most apt, as it most nearly approximated to the śūdra caste. The explicit statement about slavery cannot be mere imagination, because Megasthenes represented a king who had just fought a losing war with Candragupta, and would have lost many of his people as slaves to the conqueror, had the Indians had any sort of slavery on the Greek model. Alexander a few years earlier had taken more than 70,000 slaves in the frontier province and part of the Punjab. The procedure was quite normal in Greece, for each of Xenophon's Ten Thousand had taken a slave or two during the march. Their cultured general, a disciple of Socrates, recouped his own fortunes at the very end by a kidnapping raid for slaves and ransom. The real difficulty arises from the philosophical interpretation given by Diodorus Siculus, who idealized the situation described by Megasthenes :

"Of the several remarkable customs existing among Indians, there is one prescribed by their ancient philosophers which one may regard as truly admirable : for the law ordains that no one among them shall, under any circumstances, be a slave, but that, enjoying freedom, they shall respect the equal right to it which all possess: for those (they thought) who have learned neither to domineer over nor cringe to others will attain the life best adapted for all vicissitudes of lot: for it is but *fair and reasonable* to institute laws which bind all equally, but allow *property to be unevenly distributed*." (*Meg.* 38; Dio. Sic. II. 39, text E. Schwanbeck, Bonn 1846).

This is pure idealization on the part of Diodorus, who was himself against slavery. The Indian philosophers never troubled their head about social inequality, which was built into their society by the caste system; only a few individuals could transcend it by *śramaṇic* renunciation. The case is made much worse by poor translation or bad printing, for the Greek *euêthes* and *exousias anomalous* are much better represented by the Latin translator's *stultum* and *inaequalitatem facultatum* than

the two italicized English phrases in the last sentence of the quotation. The final sentence should therefore end : "it is stupid to institute laws which bind all equally but allow unequal distribution of opportunity". Just as the Greeks failed to adopt Diodorus's solution to the problem of slavery, the Indians failed to adopt Hellenic reasoning about natural phenomena in preference to the 'crude' attitude that the scientifically minded Greeks perceived among the Indian philosophers. The reasons were the same in each case : the class in possession had nothing to gain from the change, while the status of commodity production was totally different in the two societies.

7.3. The heir to the armies of Candragupta and Bindusāra has left us his own words carved in rock. Asoka's rescripts would be remarkable as a first step for the epigraphy of any country. The few known pre-Asokan stūpas and structures (characterized by very large bricks) also seem negligible when compared with the considerable edifices left by Asoka. The Mauryan palace at Patna (Kumrahar) was admired by Chinese pilgrims at the beginning of the fifth century A.D., but lost within the next two hundred years by fire. The huge stone pillars supposedly went down through a hundred feet or more of the soft wet soil upon which they had once been supported by wooden foundation-beams. Recent archaeology has disproved this guesswork (*IAR*. 1955, p. 19). The brilliant polish of Asokan granite columns, described by the Chinese but laughed away as impossible by their European readers, was confirmed after Cunningham's first excavations at Sārnāth. The lion capital, though the wheel of sovereignty it once supported has crumbled under the action of time, the elements, hostile visitors, and vandals, still remains one of the world's great works of art, well worthy to be the national symbol of India. Nevertheless, the most impressive of Asokan monuments, both in the monarch's intentions and in their effect upon modern observers, remain the words of his inscriptions. Their decipherment[3] was a meritorious feat even in a generation which saw the Egyptian hieroglyphics and the first cuneiform writings again restored to human knowledge. They form so great a contrast to the works about Alexander, and to what the surviving fragments of Megasthenes would have led anyone to expect

about the Magadhan ruler, that it is necessary to pass them in review.[4]

(*RE.* 1): "This rescript on *dhamma* (morality) has been caused to be written by king Piyadasi, Beloved-of-the-gods. Here (in my kingdom) no living being must be killed and sacrificed. And no *samāja*, festival meeting must be held. For king Piyadasi Beloved-of-the-gods sees much evil in festival meetings. Nevertheless, there are some (sorts of) festival meetings which are also considered meritorious by king Piyadasi...Formerly in the kitchen of king Piyadasi... many hundred thousands of animals were killed daily for making curry. But now,... only three animals are being killed for curry: two peacocks and one deer, though even this deer not regularly. Even these three animals shall not be killed in the future."

In commenting on this, we have always to ask why Asoka thought it necessary to put such words, for the first time, in public, imperishable form, as against all else he could have said. The form of his inscriptions, of his lion capital, of the vanished palace, were all supposedly borrowed (according to European historians of today) from the inscriptions and palace of Darius. He could not have seen the former; the latter had been fired at one of Alexander's orgies. Asokan sculpture is definitely adopted from Indian woodwork. These simple words deliberately avoid the lofty attitude and sonorous rhetorical periods of Darius, who proclaimed himself "Great king, king of kings, king of provinces of diverse nationality, king of this mighty earth even to a far distance... Ahuramazda beheld this world embattled, then handed it over to me, made me to be its king, and I was king. According to the desire of Ahuramazda have I re-established (the shaken earth) into its place". Asoka never claims to be on special terms with the Almighty, nor does he boast of his lineage and his conquests. The sentiment is clear enough. The movement for banning vedic sacrifices, which started with Magadhan religions, is here completed. The sacrifices went out of fashion with the pastoral economy when independent petty kingdoms had been wiped out. Here the remnant, animal killing at some kind of tumultuous saturnalia (*Arth.* 1.21, 2.25, 5.2; clearly religious, 13.5), is also forbidden, as it already had been for soldiers (*Arth.* 10.1). The sacrifices might have revived if the *samāja* were permitted. The occasional *samāja* remains to this day, as in the *vetāḷa* sacrifices

mentioned in the second chapter. The grand annual *hoḷī* festival (without sacrifice, but with obscene shouts, drinking, and bonfires) is a fertility orgy that may be traced back to the late stone age. Large mesolithic deposits of ashes, with a few animal bones (from the sacrifices), and rain-compacted strata prove annual or periodic recurrence in the same locality[7] of sacrifice associated with gigantic *hoḷī* bonfires. Here is proof that the agrarian economy had won at last; the pastoral life and ritual were finally defeated.

(*RE.* 2). "Everywhere in the dominions of king Piyadasi Beloved-of-the-gods and likewise among his borderers such as the Coḍas, the Pāṇḍyas, the Satiyaputa, the Keralaputa, even Tāmrapaṃi, the Yona king Antiyaka, and also the kings who are neighbours of this Antiyaka — everywhere two kinds of medical treatment were established by king Piyadasi Beloved-of-the-gods: medical treatment for men and medical treatment for beasts. And wherever there were no herbs that are beneficial to men and beneficial to cattle, everywhere they were caused to be imported and to be planted. On the roads wells were caused to be dug, and trees were caused to be planted for the use of cattle and men".

This pious action is also important for what it implies. First, that there were no other kings in India comparable in status to the Magadhan absolute monarch: all the Indian names are those of tribes or of territories. It is assumed that 'there must have been kings'. Alexander's tribal opponents have regularly been saddled with 'rājās' by modern historians, though tribal chiefs were never absolute even when hereditary, while they could also be elective. The contrast has been ignored with Asoka's explicit mention of Greek kings by name. Incidentally, the Greek names in *RE.* 13 serve to date this edict as not being later than 258 B.C. when Magas of Cyrene died. The ward *sāmanta* used to mean 'neighbouring ruler' for Antiochus (II, Theos) is not applied to the Indian neighbours of Asoka; it would come to mean 'feudatory' or 'tributary' prince, a thousand years later (and is sometimes thus mistranslated by J. J. Meyer in *Arth.*). Finally, the good actions are all along the 'roads', which means the major trade-routes, and a great help to the trade which had emanated from Magadha much earlier, without this sort of aid. *PE.* 7 describes these step-in wells, mango and shade-tree groves as one *yojana* apart, which

is quite logical. The word *yojana* means the distance a bullock-cart caravan could travel between in-spanning and out-spanning; the route from Śrāvastī to Taxila was taken as 147 *yojanas* in length; in our units, a *yojana* would be between 4½ to 9 miles. The Asokan arrangements for caravan resting places, and therewith the trade routes, could still be traced by competent archaeologists. Penetration of Asoka's influence resulted in the formation or transformation of kingships among the Indian tribes, while the Greek kings, assured of his pacific intentions, settled down to the task of fighting among themselves.

(*RE.* 3). "When I had been anointed twelve years, the following was ordered by me. Everywhere in my dominions the *yuktas*, the *rajūka*, and the *prādesika* shall set out on a complete tour (throughout their charges) every five years for this very purpose—for the following instruction in morality as well as for other business: 'Meritorious is obedience to mother and father. Liberality to friends, acquaintances, and relatives, to brahmins and śramaṇas is meritorious. Abstention from killing animals is meritorious. Moderation in expenditure, moderation in possession are meritorious'. The (ministerial) council shall also order the *yuktas* to register (these rules) both with (the addition of) reasons and according to the letter".

Asoka's conversion to Buddhism has led to his being compared to Constantine; the parallel may be heightened by the legend that he treated his son Kuṇāla at the instance of a jealous empress much as the Christian did his son Crispus. Nevertheless, we do not find this concentration upon morality in Constantine's inscriptions. Had Asoka, for example, been simply the religious dotard as he is sometimes made out to be, it would have been the easiest matter in the world to displace him either voluntarily, or by force, in the tradition followed from the fifth century B.C. Fifty years after him, Bṛhadratha was violently removed by the army commander Puṣyamitra, while the last Śuṅga in the line of Puṣyamitra was killed by the brahmin minister who made himself king against all vedic precept or tradition. It is remarkable that Asoka's powerful Greek neighbours did not venture to copy Alexander, as did the weaker Yavanas who rushed in two generations later. Therefore, these edicts manifest something beyond religion, the more so as there is nothing particularly Buddhist about them.

Let it be suggested that there was a more than a personal conversion of the emperor, a deeper conversion of the whole previous state apparatus to suit a new class-structure and type of society. The significant advice is about the minimum expenditure and minimum possessions, for the greatest economic strain is manifested in the heavily debased and hastily minted (fig. 33) coinage. Hoarding, whether by merchants or householders, would create shortages to put considerable power in the hands of the trader. New territory had been opened up to the south which could not possibly be supplied from the old bases of commodity production. The officials are those mentioned by Megasthenes as forming two castes ; titles seem to be confirmed by the *Arthaśāstra*:

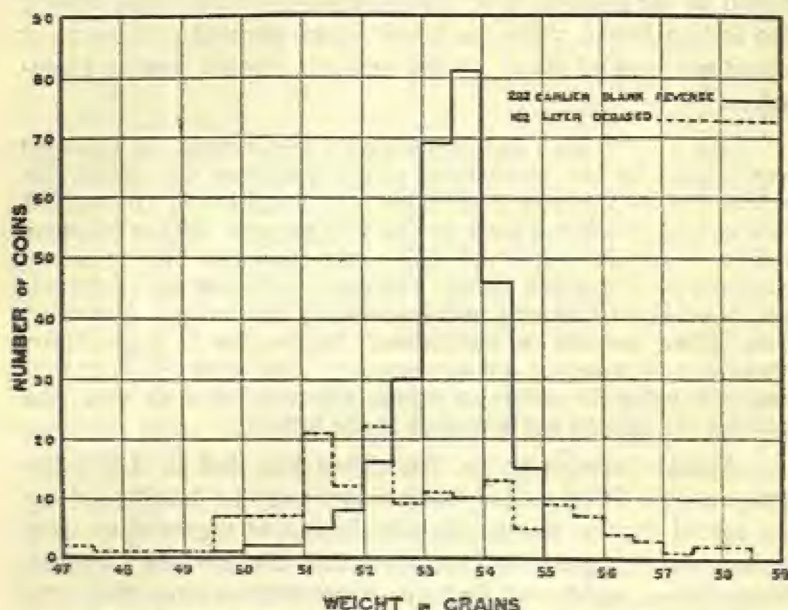


Fig. 33. Comparative variation in weights of pre-Mauryan and Asokan coins found at Taxila.

(*RE.* 4). "Such as they had not been for many hundreds of years, thus there are now promoted, through the instruction in *dhamma* (morality) on the part of king Piyadasi Beloved-of-the-gods, abstention from killing animals, abstention from hurting living beings,

courtesy to relatives, courtesy to brahmins and śramaṇas, obedience to mother and father, obedience to the aged... (*RE.* 5): In times past (great ministers) called *mahāmātras* of *dhamma* (morality) did not exist before Mahāmātras of morality were appointed by me (when I had been) anointed thirteen years. They are occupied with all sects in establishing *dhamma*, in promoting *dhamma*, and for the welfare and happiness of those who are devoted to *dhamma* (even) among the Yonas, Kambojas, and Gandhāras, and whatever other western borderers (of mine there may be). They are occupied with servants and masters, with (the highest) brahmins and (the lowest) *ibhyas*, with the destitute, with the aged... They are occupied in supporting prisoners (with money), in causing their fetters to be taken off, and in setting them free, if one has children, or is bewitched, or aged respectively.... (*RE.* 6) In times past neither the disposal of affairs nor the submission of reports existed. The following (arrangement) has been made by me. Reporters must report to me (without delay) on the affairs of the people at any time, anywhere, even while I am eating, in the harem, in the inner apartments, in the privy, (being carried) in the litter, in the park. And everywhere I shall dispose of the affairs of the people. And also, if in the council (of ministers) a dispute arises, or an amendment is moved, in connection with any donation or proclamation which I am ordering by word of mouth, or in connection with an urgent matter which has been delegated to the *mahāmātras*, it must be reported to me immediately, anywhere, at any time."

The king, therefore, does not just preach morality with the zest of a new convert, but promulgates radically new administrative measures. The sentiments became so familiar later on as to lose all special force; here, we have the imperial administration utilizing methods of rule which were then revolutionary. (*RE.* 7) "King Piyadasi Beloved-of-the-gods desires that all sects may reside everywhere". This sounds trivial, having at best been interpreted as permission for people to travel freely. In fact, this was the most far-reaching concession to the new method of administration by *dhamma*, 'morality'. The word *dhammaka*, which today would mean 'pious' is translated on the coins of Menander by *dikaios*, the Greek equivalent of 'just'. Religious teachers who might make converts had previously been forbidden to enter crown villages, which covered virtually the greater part of the countryside. Here, they are encouraged, regardless of sect. Asoka is not preaching Buddhism, nor morality in general, but proclaiming the superiority of justice, social ethics, over naked force

backing arbitrary laws. His tours of inspection replaced hunting (*RE.* 8) and such pleasures by newer 'morality' administration, for he visited and made gifts everywhere to brahmins and to ascetics, of all creeds.

In *PE.* 7, Asoka proclaimed :

"Some Mahāmātras were ordered by me to busy themselves with the affairs of the (Buddhist) *Saṃgha* (monastic order). Likewise others were ordered by me to busy themselves also with brahmins and Ājīvikas ; others were ordered by me to busy themselves with the Nigaṇṭhas (Jains); others were ordered by me to busy themselves also with various other sects."

This was necessary because the sects, already engaged in heated theological discussion, might disturb the very peace and welfare they were supposed to promote, once state backing made them fashionable. His personal attachment to Buddhism is proved by the Sāñcī and Sārnāth pillars, and Calcutta-Bairāṭ rock inscription, specially addressed to the Buddhist Order. At the village of Rummindei (Nepal) he "came himself and worshipped because the Buddha Sakyamuni was born here...caused a stone pillar to be set up (because) the Blessed One was born here. He made the village of Lummini free of *bali* tax, an eighth-paying (village)". This brought the Buddha down to earth from the sun-myth that Senart and others had made him, confirming the Pāli texts; the survival of the place-name in an obscure village for over 2500 years is remarkable. The *bali* tax is mentioned in *Arth.* 2.6, while the normal sixth share of produce for lands not in the crown's direct possession seems here reduced to an eighth.

However, Buddhism had begun to show the influence of the factors that led to the 'universal empire'. The Nigalī-Sāgar Asokan pillar shows that at least one "previous Buddha" (Koṇākamana) of the seven or more in the scriptures had a stūpa dedicated to him, enlarged by Asoka to twice the original size. The fictitious "previous" Buddhas not only competed with the previous Tīrthaṃkaras of the Jains but also followed the model of imperial succession. The books which were now collected into the *tripiṭaka* ('three bundles', not

'three baskets') Buddhist canon repeatedly emphasize the parallel between *cakravartin*=' emperor with the wheel insignia' and the Buddha who turns the *cakra*='wheel of the law'. The wheel hereafter characterized both emperor and Buddha iconographically. As society changed, the Teacher was also transformed; the equivalent of a simple tribal chief over a voluntary *saṃgha* became a far loftier figure, symbolic dual of the emperor. The influence of Buddhism upon the empire was not greater than the influence of the empire upon Buddhism. The tradition — contested as usual — remains that princes and princesses of the royal house took holy orders. Buddhism and a cutting of the sacred *pipal* tree under which the Sakyan Teacher reached enlightenment, were taken by prince Mahinda to Ceylon in Asoka's day. A third Buddhist council was (supposedly) convoked under Moggaliputta Tissa's chairmanship. The first was at Rājagṛha just after the Buddha's death, the second a hundred years later at Vesālī in the reign of Kāḷāsoka — according to the Buddhist tradition. It is noteworthy that no sympathetic Magadhan royal audience, let alone patronage, is claimed for any of these religions between king Ajātaśatru, reported as the first to build *stūpas* over Buddhist relics, and Asoka who enlarged and multiplied them beyond count. Nor for that matter do we hear a word about any vedic sacrifices having been performed by the Magadhan Śiśunāga kings whom the purāṇas describe as *kṣatrabandhavaḥ*, in contempt and rage whether they were *Nāgas* or not. The Jains were less favoured though they claim a Candragupta, sometimes supposed to be the first Mauryan, as convert. A considerable number followed the Jain *ācārya* Bhadrabāhu (about 300 B.C.) southwards, to settle in Kanarese territory. Their main support would have been the Magadhan traders who had been attracted by the gold, and other produce that the Hyderabad-Mysore country had yielded since the late stone age. Asoka's edicts there were seen by people of the late stone and early iron ages, who continued, as at Brahmagiri, to build their great stone cist-tombs for some time afterwards.

The mechanism of violence had been tried out earlier:

(*RE.* 13) When king Piyadasi Beloved-of-the-gods had been anointed eight years, the country of the Kaliṅgas was conquered by

him ; 150,000 in number were the men who were deported (*apavuḍhe*) thence. 100,000 in number were those who were slain there, and many times as many those who died."

The people were carried off (*apavuḍhe*) not into slavery, but for settlement upon crown lands, as we know from the older *Arthaśāstra* policy; specifically, the verb is so used in *Arth.* 2.1, 7.1, 7.16, 9.4, 11.1, 13.5. There is no mention of any king or princes in Kaliṅga, which must therefore have developed sufficiently out of the tribal stage to support a considerable population, without having any powerful kings or kingship.[9] Such development is to be expected by stimulus of the Mauryan neighbourhood; a good case may be made out for the Brahmagiri-Candravalli megalithic culture to have developed out of a more primitive layer by Mauryan contact, and trade, though regular agriculture began with the Sātavāhanas. Asoka recommends peaceful conquest by morality, the only true conquest.

"There is no country where these classes, the brahmins and the *śramaṇas* do not exist, except among the Yonas; and there is no (place) in any country where men are not indeed attached to some sect. Therefore even the hundredth part or the thousandth part of all those people who were slain, who died, and who were deported (*apavuḍhe*) at that time when Kaliṅga was taken (would) now be considered deplorable by the Beloved-of-the-gods. . . . Even the inhabitants of the forests which are in the dominions of Beloved-of-the-gods, even those he pacifies and converts. And they are told of the power which Beloved-of-the-gods (possesses) in spite of (his) repentance, in order that they may be ashamed (of their crimes) and may not be killed."

The problem of the *āṭavika* forest savages was never tackled before him, except by massacre. The *Arthaśāstra* would use these savages only for military politics and intrigue. One may note that deportation of conquered people no longer seemed necessary for state economic purposes when this edict was promulgated.

"And this (conquest by morality) has been won repeatedly by Beloved-of-the-gods, both here and among all borderers, even as far as at 600 *yojanas*, where the Yona king Antiochus (rules) and beyond this Antiochus where four kings are ruling named Ptolemaios,

Antigonos, Magas, and Alexandros, and towards the south (among) the Coḍas and Pāṇḍyas, as far as Tāmraparṇi (Ceylon, or a river near the tip of the peninsula). Likewise here in the king's territory, among the Yonas and Kambojas, among the Nabhākas and Nabhitis, among the Bhojas and Pitinikas, among the Andhras and Pulindas — everywhere (people) are conforming to Beloved-of-the-gods's instructions in morality."

The names have been modernized a little. There is no reason to doubt the great success of the new method, accompanied as it was by useful public works along the trade routes, as well as by new trade. *RE.* 4 may indicate that the great army was thereafter used mainly for parades and festival demonstrations.

Asoka's numerous pillar edicts and the minor inscriptions carry the same tale further. We obtain a fair idea of the officials and divisions of the empire. There were viceroys at Ujjain, Taxila, Tosali, and an *āryaputra* (high governor) in the Deccan, near Brahmagiri. Asoka himself seems as a prince to have been viceroy at Taxila, and quelled a revolt of the inhabitants (perhaps another of the Khaśa) which seems not unlikely, seeing the deteriorated position of Taxila after the Greek and Mauryan conquests. He does not call himself "emperor", but "the Magadhan king", Magadha and the Gangetic valley being directly administered. The name Asoka is found only in the Maski rock edict (and recently at Gujarra, *IAR.* 1955. p. 2), with the usual title *devānampiya* =Beloved of-the-gods. He first proclaimed a new and inspiring ideal of kingship: (Dhauli. 1) " All men are my children " . . . (Dhauli. 2) "For the following purpose do I instruct you (my officials) that I may discharge the debt which I owe them." *PE.* 5 prescribes detailed non-killing of animals. There is no ban on beef, which was sold at the crossroads, but among the inviolable animals were *saṇḍaka* 'bulls set free', as they are to this day though now dedicated to Śiva. "Forests must not be burnt either uselessly or in order to destroy (living beings)", which terminated the honoured Aryan method of land-clearing, as completely as Asoka's ideal of the king's obligations finished the Yajurvedic king who concentrated upon animal sacrifices. Prisoners were given general release twenty-five times in the first twenty-six years of his reign. However, the one animal whose killing could have been effectively prohibited by royal

clemency was still sent to his death, the criminal featherless biped :

(*PE.* 4). "For the following is to be desired, that there should be both impartiality in judicial proceedings and impartiality in punishments. And my order reaches so far that a respite of three days (before execution) is granted by me to persons lying in prison on whom sentence has been passed, who have been condemned to death. (In this way) either (their) relatives will persuade those (*Lajūka* officers) to grant them life, or, if there is none who persuades, they will bestow gifts or will undergo fasts in order to (obtain happiness) in the other world."

The most humane of kings was still a king, all for law and order with capital punishment.

To whom were these rock and pillar inscriptions addressed?

(*PE.* 7). "The following occurred to me. I shall issue proclamations on morality, shall order instruction in morality (to be given). Hearing this, men will conform to (it)...The Lajūkas (administrators) also, who are occupied with many hundreds of thousands of men, — these too were ordered by me: 'In such and such a manner exhort ye the people'...Having this very (matter) in view, I have set up pillars of *dhamma* (morality), appointed Mahamatra (ministers) of *dhamma*, issued proclamations of *dhamma*. (Dhauli I, II) This edict must be (read out to and) listened to (by full gatherings) on every day of the constellation of Tiṣya (three times a year) and it may be listened to even by individuals on frequent other occasions...For the following purpose has this rescript been written here: in order that the judicial officers of the city may strive at all times (for this, that) neither undeserved fettering nor harsh treatment are happening to (men)."

That is, not only the people in general but the all-powerful *rajjuka* officials were to follow the new way. Every citizen was to be made conscious of new rights and new state methods. Fettering, whether deserved or undeserved, was not simple imprisonment but penal slavery. Undeserved fettering would mean keeping a man at work (as a penal slave) after he had served out the amercement, as well as sentence on the innocent. Every five years, high ministers were to inspect the provinces to see that these instructions as to justice were being carried out. The Dhauli edicts covered a territory recently conquered, but the same instructions were sent out to the viceroys at Ujjain and Taxila. The simple words therefore amounted to

a new 'Bill of Rights'. This accounts for style and language. However, the philologists' argument that each edict was written in the local dialect is not clear to me. It is difficult to believe that the aboriginal population of Maski (south of Raichūr) and Brahmagiri (Mysore) spoke a variety of Māgadhī or that a frontier Greek who might have read the letter of Alexander in an early copy could follow the Asokan language as well. Surely, the instructions are meant in the first instance for the local bureaucracy, which, like most of the traders, had to know the language of Magadha — in the north, not too different from the peoples' languages. The variations between edicts are precisely those one would expect in a language not yet standardized by extensive literary use. One finds more variation in rustic Hindi, or Koṅkaṇī to this day; for the latter, in a range of 60 miles. Standardization came after the Pāli canon, which is nearest to the Ujjain variant of Asokan Māgadhī, though the Buddha would not have spoken it himself any more than an Alpine Italian would adopt the Sicilian dialect for his sermons. The tremendous importance of the edicts to the officers and citizens of the empire follows from their being the very first declarations written down in India for public use, graven upon imperishable rock often laboriously transported from considerable distance for the purpose.

7.4. The Mauryan administration before Asoka is described in the *Arthaśāstra* of Kauṭalya (incorrectly Kauṭilya), otherwise known as Cāṇakya and Viṣṇugupta, traditionally the great minister of Candragupta Maurya. The authenticity of this extraordinary and still difficult book has been doubted with unusually acrid, even rabid, polemic. The question must be discussed if our deductions from the work are to remain valid. The bitterest criticism was made by Keith :

"Efforts have naturally been made to find at least striking resemblance between the account given in the *Arthaśāstra* and the fragments of Megasthenes. The effort is a complete failure; coincidences there are many in number, but on matters which hold good of India generally in the period before and after Christ. The vital resemblances of important detail are lacking, even when we put aside all those statements of the Greek author which rest doubtless on misunderstandings or are obscurely reported. The *Arthaśāstra*

knows nothing of the wooden fortifications of Pāṭaliputra but provides for stone work; it ignores the boards of town officials without any head of each, but engaged in cooperation which Megasthenes specifies; it knows nothing of the commander in chief of the fleet and a regular navy such as Candragupta must have used, but which was probably of minor account in many states. The care of strangers, escorting them to the border, seeing after their effects if deceased, are unknown to the *Arthaśāstra* which does not provide for the registration of births and deaths, while the work of Megasthenes's board in selling old and new manufactured articles contrasts strikingly with the highly developed commercial and industrial conditions envisaged by the *Arthaśāstra*. Megasthenes's statement as to the king's ownership of the land is supported by other Indian evidence; it is not the view of the *Arthaśāstra;* the taxes of Megasthenes are simple as compared with the numerous imposts of the text, and while Megasthenes ignores writing, the *Arthaśāstra* is full of rules on registration, the preparation of royal documents, and recognizes passports...That the work was a product of C. 300 (A.D.) written by an official attached to some court is at least plausible if it cannot be proved" (*Hist. Skt. Lit.* London 1940, pp. 459-61).

The same author earlier (*JRAS.* 1916, 130) stated as perfectly possible that it was "an early work, and that it may be assigned to the first century B.C., while its matter very probably is older by a good deal than that." There is no explanation for the change of 'probable' date, except a massive prejudice, which would also explain many of the ridiculous objections. If what survives of Megasthenes does not mention writing, are we to conclude that Asoka suddenly invented it a generation later, or should we doubt the authenticity of the Asokan edicts too? Strabo (15.1.67) reports Nearchos to the effect that Indians wrote upon finely woven cloth. The *Arthaśāstra,* so far from not mentioning state ownership, is mainly preoccupied with the exploitation of *sītā* state land. Megasthenes's state board (*Meg.* 87=Strabo 15.1.50-52) for selling goods is fully confirmed (*Arth.* 4.2). Officials were constantly transferred and each group had several chiefs (*bahumukhyam; Arth.* 2.9) which again supports the Greek report of magisterial boards. Not only births and deaths but every human being and all his property was carefully registered by the *gopa* registrars (*Arth.* 2.35,36), who also had to report the migration of every person out of their jurisdiction, whether in town or village. There were spies with every caravan and in all

walks of life; strangers were observed with particular care. There is a chapter (*Arth.* 2.28) devoted to the navy and merchant marine. The stone fortifications were not for Pāṭaliputra (nowhere specially mentioned), but for citadels in newly established district (*janapada*) headquarters. The king's special bodyguard of armed women noted by Megasthenes (Strabo 15.1.55-6; Meg. 70-71) was precisely that which protected the king from his waking moments, according to *Arth.* 1.21. When we put aside all those statements of Megasthenes which someone may consider 'obscurely reported' or based upon some misunderstanding, there is nothing left, so no question remains of concordance with the *Arthaśāstra* whose natural obscurity can be augmented without limit by whimsical scholarship. As for vital matters 'that hold good of India generally in the period before and after Christ' (whatever that may mean) few may be found except that the Indians breathed air and trod the earth; productive relationships and political entities had changed beyond recognition from 300 B.C. to 300 A.D. It seems incredible to me that in the year 300 A.D., when there was no Indian kingdom or state of any size, some petty court official would specially reconstruct this far from paradisaic Utopia. To do so in a document full of unexplained technical terms, invent functionaries that tally to a considerable extent with the Asokan (but not with any 'after Christ') would be a useless though miraculous achievement. All known works prepared about 300 A.D. have a totally different flavour, with heavy emphasis upon pious *nīti* morality, which is the one fault that cannot be ascribed to the supremely realistic *Arthaśāstra*. Post-Christian literature on political economy is loaded with religious precepts, as would be natural for any theoretician after Asoka's fabulous reputation had set the norm for Indian kings. Finally, Cāṇakya, as we see him in the supposed forgery, is obviously a brahmin but systematically against standard brahmin practices and financial privileges for brahmins, which would be incredible for 300 A.D. It would certainly have made the book far too unpopular to be copied, whereas it was known for its high authority to Daṇḍin, Kāmandaki, and Rājaśekhara (10th century). A northern palm-leaf MS. fragment of the 12th century A.D. survives. The

work went out of fashion only because it described the structure and aggrandizement of a state that was no longer possible. The *Arthaśāstra* society, with its relatively high commodity production, numerous contracts, and state enterprise, was unique.

Two substantial objections remain. *Arth.* 2.11 mentions a coral *Ālakandaka*, and says (after describing Indian Tussore silk as *pattrorṇā*) that 'silk and *cīnapaṭṭa* cloth originates in China (*Cīna*)'. Sylvain Levi's ingenious equation *ālakandaka* = Alexandrian may be admitted, (*MP.* has Alasanda for Alexandria) but it does not indicate a late date for the book. Alexander founded many Alexandrias as new trade centers; the first and best of them immediately became a great emporium because of its position. If coins of Arrhidaios and Diodotos could reach India in mint condition, there is no reason why Alexandrian goods could not. Mediterranean coral was always highly prized in India, being known later as Roman coral (*romaka-pravāḷa*), so that the Alexandrian variety would not necessarily be fished off the mouth of the Nile, but only traded from that locality. A similar reasoning applies to the supposed derivation of *suruṅgā* (tunnel or sap) in *Arth.* 13.4 from the Greek *syrinx*. This says nothing in favour of a date after 305 B.C., by which time Bindusāra's army had become familiar with Greek poliorcetics. The other argument is that *cīna* could not be the name for the whole of China before Chin Shih Hwang Ti unified it under his rule in 221 B.C. However, Chin was the name of a kingdom centuries earlier, which controlled the land trade-route to India, and traded in silk. Nothing is said about *cīna* being 'the whole of China', for the same chapter also states that '*cīnasī* furs come from Balkh' — on the same trade-route, which still transmits the identical furs.

It cannot be denied that there may be brief later interpolations in the *Arthaśāstra*, to bring it up to date in small details, just as a good deal of the work itself rests solidly upon previous administrative practice, and a theory of statecraft which can only be pre-Mauryan. The separation of the Atharva-veda from the other three in *Arth.* 1.3 would be earlier than the standard brahmin grouping of all four vedas together.

Arth. 5.5 cites, among former writers upon the subject, one Dīrgha Cārāyaṇa on signs that manifest the king's displeasure, "as straws (the wind)"; this worthy reminds one of Dīrgha-kārāyaṇa, minister of Kosalan Pasenadi, who avenged his uncle, the Mallian Bandhula. The injunction (*Arth.* 2.1) against admitting missionary ascetics to crown villages could not be post-Asokan.

Book 11 of *Arth.* consists of a single chapter on the technique of breaking up tribes (*saṃgha*).

"Kṣatriya guilds (*śreṇī*) in Kamboja, Surāṣṭra and the like subsist upon husbandry and arms. The Licchavika, Vrajika, Mallaka, Madraka, Kukura, Kuru, Pāñcāla and the like subsist by the title *rājan* (oligarch). Agents provocateurs should gain access to all these tribes, discover the possible sources of jealousy, hatred, contention among them, should disseminate the seeds of progressive dissension. . .Let those of higher rank (within the tribe) be discouraged from eating at a common table with, and marriage with those of lower standing. Tribesmen of lower rank should, on the other hand, be instigated to (insist upon) commensality and intermarriage with the higher. The lesser should be provoked to claim equality of status in family, prowess, and change of place (? tribal office or assignment of tribal land, both of which could be rotated). Public decisions and tribal custom should be brought to dissolution by insistence upon the contrary. Litigation should be turned into a fight by the (king's paid) bravi who, at night, injure property, beasts, or men (of one party, to throw the blame upon the other, thereby fomenting the quarrel). On all occasions of (such intra-tribal) conflict, the king should support the weaker party with (his own) funds and army, should instigate them to annihilate their opponents ; or he (the king) might deport the splinter groups. Otherwise, he might settle the whole lot upon the land in one region, in detached farming units of five to ten families each. If they all remained together in one place, they might be capable of taking up arms. (Therefore) let (the king) set a fine against their re-union. . . .Thus might he proceed against the tribes (to become) the sole absolute ruler (over them, as over the rest of the land); so, on the other hand, might the tribes protect themselves against being thus overcome by the (external) absolute monarch." (*Arth.*11.1).

The quotation is attested by other source material. Kukura should denote the dog totem, which we recognized elsewhere. Vassakāra, brahmin minister to Ajātaśatru of Magadha, employed the technique of splitting up a tribe from within, by class differentiation and calumny, against the Licchavis.

Cāṇakya adds thereto the use of ambush, poison, assassination, strong drink, women (courtezans, nuns, mistresses, supposedly rich widows), actors, dancers, soothsayers, and corruption by enticement of private wealth in place of tribal property. The specific tribal names show that the particular tribes had been formidable and their survivors were still potentially dangerous. This is comprehensible for an early Mauryan document (but for no later age), in the light of the purāṇa report that Mahāpadma Nanda (just before the Mauryans) had destroyed the last of these traditional Kṣatriya tribes. Rejection of commensality, refusal of free intermarriage between "higher and lower", are symptoms of the development of classes within the tribe as well as the first step towards the formation of separate castes. The chapter explicity recommends identical measures to bring about the disintegration of the *āṭavika* forest savages as for the more advanced tribes encamped in fighting units. The verb *apavaḥ* for deportation, employed twice in *Arth.* 11.1, is precisely that used by Asoka while describing his devastation of Kaliṅga. The mention of Kamboja without Yona (which normally accompanies it in Pāli sources and the Asokan rescripts) again suggests a date for the passage before the final acceptance (by Bindusāra) of the Greek occupation of west Afghanistan. The statement gives a priceless outline of the policy whereby tribal life and production — whether Aryan or not — were systematically converted into a caste-ridden peasantry conditioned not to bear arms, nor to unite in opposition to the state.

The treatise, unique in Sanskrit for its compression, lack of flourishes, and terse prose, sets down precepts deduced from known state practice, and probably from the "fifth veda", history (*itihâsaveda*) now lost. The main purpose of the work is stated explicitly at the very beginning: "Having gathered together all the diverse *arthaśāstras* composed by former magistri (*ācārya*), for the purpose of gaining (rule over) the whole earth and maintaining it, this single *arthaśāstra* has been composed". The earth, however, means the whole of India from mountains to the sea. "The place (of the conqueror) is the earth. The field thereof for the *cakravartin* emperor (stretches) from the Himālayas down to the sea, a thousand

yojanas from corner to corner". From the sixth book onwards, the writer concentrates upon military and political methods of aggression, thought out without the least respect for morality or political ethics, on the grounds of expediency alone. Not only proper strategy, tactics, military engines, logistics of supply, political alliances, but also downright treachery and assassination are recommended wherever they pay better than other methods. The first five books consolidate the internal administration of the state in *janapada* units, each with its ministerial overseers for every department. This would provide a secure base for expansion and conquest. These sections will naturally occupy us more than the rest, for they show the structure of the state mechanism before Asoka, and explain the inevitability of the Asokan change when the older system had been worked to exhaustion.

There is not the least trace of 'idealism': "Material gain (*artha*) alone is the principal aim," says Kauṭalya (contradicting previous *ācāryas*) "for morality (*dharma*) and pleasures of the senses (*kāma*) are both rooted in material gain (*artha-mūlau*)." This point of view, consistently followed, might account for the change of name from Kauṭalya to Kauṭilya in later tradition from *kuṭila*='crooked'. This work undoubtedly is "crooked" from the brahmin *nīti* point of view, though even brahmins did not avoid following the abhorred precepts whenever convenient. The writer was not a pre-bourgeois Bismarck inditing memoirs in disgruntled retirement, nor a Machiavelli advising some greater Cesare Borgia how to unite renaissance Italy. He had behind him a paying administrative tradition that had resulted in visible expansion which needed just a few more aggressive steps to complete or consolidate the 'universal empire'.

The society in which the book was written engaged in large-scale commodity production and trade over long distances. However, the work does not describe a state of the commodity producers. The reason was that the king, as the successor to chiefs of many different tribes, and as the recipient of great revenues in kind from harvested grain and from local manufacture, had to convert a substantial part of these gains into commodities to pay the army and bureaucracy. The

state, therefore, was itself the greatest trader, the supreme monopolist. While it liquidated all tribal customs that had become hindrances to commodity production, it looked upon the private trader with the utmost suspicion. The merchant is, along with the artizan, guild-actor (*kuśīlava*), beggar, and sleight-of-hand juggler, listed among the "thieves that are not called by the name of thief" (*Arth.* 4.1), and treated accordingly. Thus, there was a fundamental contradiction in the political theory and therefore in the administrative policy of the *Arthaśāstra* which blocked the road to further progress.

7.5. The *Arthaśāstra* state regulated and profited from everything down to the last detail. Fines take up nine full columns of the index to Shāmasāstry's English translation, not to speak of other types of punishment. The law applied to all, though the higher castes were allowed some class-privilege against the lower. Only in matters of inheritance was any concession made to local custom: "The laws of inheritance should be adjusted suitably according to usage of the caste, tribe, or village". Women had full rights — though carefully regulated — including that of remarriage and their own property (*strīdhana*) which appears for the first time (*Arth.* 3.4). In its endless regulations, the *Arth.* has the guise of a super-code, like that of Hammurabi, but with one crucial difference. Whereas the rules given in the Mesopotamian law-book were due to the need to uniformize transactions between traders or property-owners, here the state was itself the greatest single entrepreneur, anxious to preserve its basic monopoly. The Chinese started with a much stronger merchant class at the time of Chin Shih Huang Ti. By 90 B.C. the merchants had come under vigorous attack by the official bureaucracy and soon repressed by severe cash taxes as well as by hostile sumptuary laws. The Chinese bureaucracy was founded not so much on the famous literary examination as the basic fact that care of waterworks meant action well beyond the limit of any single feudal lord's estate. With the absence of regular wages to the officials, this led to China's bureaucratic-imperial feudalism, which lasted till the early years of this century. This development may be contrasted to the Mauryan.

Some of the injunctions seem 'natural'. Tax-payers were

not to sell or mortgage their fields except to other tax-payers; tax-free lands such as special brahmin ritual– or teaching groves, might be sold or mortgaged only to others in the same category (*Arth.* 3.10). This shows that limited private rights in land could be transferred for money. Such transfer, which soon became quite rare, implies, whenever it is found, only that the environment had a heavy incidence of commodity production and trade. The private trader was regarded as a thorn (*kaṇṭaka*), a public enemy just short of a national calamity, by *Arth.* 4.2, taxed and fined for malpractices of which many are taken for granted. Prices were controlled, as well as quality. "Whenever there is a glut of trade goods, the trade superintendent shall have them sold in one (central) place. None other may be sold as long as these remain unsold. The sale is to be by merchants who are paid daily wages, and are favourably inclined to the people (*Arth.* 4.2)". The Greek ambassador had seen this practised (*Meg.* 87). State trading houses, along with state granaries, treasuries, stores for forest produce, and jails were to be specially built by the *sannidhātṛ*, (*Arth.* 2.5). Besides obeying regulation of weights and measures, the merchants had to pay tolls at both ends whenever their merchandise went from one *janapada* to another. "No commodity may be sold (by a private trader) in the place of its origin" (*Arth.* 2.22). The trader had to add value to goods by transport, which was then — as now in India — the most serious problem. His legal profit was fixed at 5% over the local price for inland commodities, 10% for foreign imports (*Arth.* 4.2). Importers were shown some concession. The state had its own superintendent of commerce (*Arth.* 2.16) who engaged in sale of royal goods, which was often most of the local surplus. Some of this goods was obtained as taxes in kind.

In some important and profitable matters the state had a monopoly. Among these were the slaughterhouses (*Arth.* 2.26), and gambling houses (*Arth.* 3.20); in the latter, the superintendent supplied true dice but took 5% of all winnings. Wines (*Arth.* 2.25) and prostitution (*Arth.* 2.27) had a separate ministry each. Gambling, prostitution and drinking were distressing concomitants of the new civic life based upon commodity production, trade, exploitation. Such they have remained

ever since, in all profit-making class-societies. However, they had developed out of tribal institutions, which might have made it all the easier for the new post-tribal state to regulate them, and to profit from them. The gambler's hymn of the Ṛgveda (*RV*. 10.34), and the *soma* book (*RV*. 9) have been mentioned; the etymology of *gaṇikā* (and even of *veśyā*) shows that prostitution had been a transformation of group marriage. All metals, from the ore to the finished article, were also a state monopoly (*Arth*. 2.12) under a separate ministry of mines, which controlled also other minerals, salt, and coinage and circulation of money. The coins could be made by private manufacturers, provided regulation currency standards were met and the royal fees were paid. There were heavy fines and drastic punishment for counterfeiting or uttering (*Arth*. 4.1). "From mining comes the treasury, from the treasury the army has its origin; through the treasury may the earth, full of treasures, be conquered." The writer knew the value of heavy industry as few in India had grasped it before the present century. Magadhan state administrators had clearly made this control of metals their standard practice long before the Mauryans.

Even foreign policy had this sort of profit for its aim. Penetration of another king's territory by treaty and mutual agreement, for the exploitation of waste-lands, mines, and natural resources, precedes any discussion of war in the book.

"This explains the selection of trade routes: My teacher says that, of two trade routes, one by water and another by land, the former is better inasmuch as it is less expensive but productive of large profit. Not so, says Kauṭalya, for a water route is liable to obstruction, not permanent, a source of imminent dangers, and incapable of defence, whereas a land route is of the opposite nature. Of water routes, one along the shore and another through the open sea, the shore route is better as it touches many trading port towns; likewise, river navigation is better as it is uninterrupted, with avoidable or endurable dangers. My teacher says that of land routes, that which leads to the Himālayas is better than that which leads to the south. Not so, says Kauṭilya, for with the exception of blankets, skins, and horses, other articles of trade such as conch shells, diamonds, precious stones, pearls, and gold are available in plenty in the south. Of routes leading to the south, either that trade route which traverses a large number of mines, which is frequented by people, and which

is less expensive and troublesome, or that route by taking which plenty of merchandise of various kinds can be obtained, is the better ...Of a cart-track and a path (*aṃsapatha*) for shoulder-loads, a cart-track is better, as it affords facilities for transport on a larger scale". (*Arth.* 7.12).

This would elucidate the main drive of the Mauryan conquest, Asoka's new policy of enhanced facilities along trade-routes, and the location of edicts at now seemingly deserted places like Maski and Brahmagiri.

This policy was accompanied by meticulous registration of all resources, including human beings. There was a *gopa* (*Arth.* 2.35-36) registrar for every five or ten villages in the country; in the city, one for ten, twenty, or forty households. The former had to know all about the fields, taxes, produce of all kinds, animals, slaves, workers, and expenditure. "He shall also keep a register of the number of young and old men that reside in each house, their records (*caritra*), occupation (*ājīva*), income (*āya*) and expenditure (*vyaya*) ..." Spies were to check this, to investigate the causes of emigration and immigration, and note all movements of undesirable persons. Similarly, the city registrar. With such registry (noted by *Meg.*) went another feature unusual in India though not to the Greeks. Cash* payment was made to every (*Arth.* 5.3) official, according to the service. The high priest, army commander, heir-apparent, mother of the king and his (chief) queen each re-

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* The only suggestion that *Arth.* payments could be in kind is in Shāma Sāstry's translation, p. 278 : "Substituting one *āḍhaka* for the salary of 60 *paṇas*, payment in gold may be commuted for that in kind". This has been repeated by V. S. Agrawāla (p. 237 of his *India as known to Pāṇini*, Lucknow 1953). The salary of 60 *paṇas* (a year) being the lowest, for *viṣṭi* drudges, one would expect that a man could feed himself for a year on one *āḍhaka* of cereals, here presumably rice. Now the largest *āḍhaka* known is of about 164 pounds, but that was in use many centuries after Cāṇakya; even this could not feed a manual labourer for a whole year, apart from the fact that he would have nothing else to make the rice palatable. The *Arth. āḍhaka* seems to have been just under 8 pounds, which makes things much worse. Actually, the context of the passage (also Gaṇapati Sāstri's commentary) shows that the question is not of commutation, but of a bonus for retainers with long service or increased skill. The rate of one *āḍhaka* per 60 *paṇas* of salary is a norm for showing royal appreciation by reward or increments, without disturbing the actual pay-scales.

ceived 48,000 *paṇas* per year. This explains Asoka's proclamation about his queen's separate charities. Fields and villages were not to be given away; only the neediest king would thus donate the very basis of state economy. This seems to account for Pasenadi's gifts to brahmins and the comparatively poorer Kosalan punch-marked coins. The scale of payment to the trained foot-soldier was 500; Megasthenes reports that they lived very well on that in peacetime. Of course, their accoutrements and weapons were supplied by the king, the latter having to be surrendered whenever the soldier entered the city. Special menials looked after elephants, horses, equipment. The drudges for unskilled work, counted as one of the necessary resources both for army and kingdom, were also paid, at the very lowest rate of 60 *paṇas* per year. This is the more remarkable as the word used *viṣṭi* means forced labour, and later indicated the unpaid feudal corvée. In *Arth.* 2.15, the chief of the (local) state storehouses is to take the labour of professionals who lived by husking, pounding, milling grain, pressing of oil and sugarcane, making sugar, carding wool. This seems to be requisitioned labour service in lieu of taxes, if the commentator is not in error about *saṃhanikā* (or *siṃhanikā*) the otherwise unknown term employed by the *Arth.* Even so, these workers were fed by the superintendent of granaries, and paid in addition not less than one and a quarter silver *paṇas* a month, so that even this cannot be called corvée labour. The grain, wool, sugarcane and other produce had to be converted into use-values before the state could barter them advantageously. A good deal of the money was to be quietly recovered by royal spies disguised as merchants selling goods at double price to the soldiers during the campaign. There was an excellent system of pensions for those who grew old, or were disabled in the king's service, and for the dependents of those who died. The fundamental importance of mining is further acknowledged by the payment of from 500 to 1000 *paṇas* to the miner. The omnipresent spies did not receive more, nor the king's own charioteer.

Megasthenes reported that 400,000 men lay in a single camp of Candragupta. With Cāṇakya's injunction that not more than a quarter of the revenues were to be paid out, and

his scales of payment, this means an immense cash revenue. The commodity production, cash economy, and budget thereby implied are virtually incalculable, when compared with anything known of later periods, down to the Mughāls. The *paṇa* was then of silver (*Arth.* 2.12) alloyed with a quarter copper, and a sixteenth of some hardening metal, which tallies reasonably well with the actual pre-Asokan Mauryan punch-marked coins. The strain upon the economy is nevertheless visible even in the *Arthaśāstra*, which recommends extraordinary measures (*Arth.* 5.2) at need, to replenish the treasury; "such demands are to be made only once, never a second time". There are capital levies of 1/4 on the grain of cultivators; fixed contributions from every jeweller, merchant, artizan. "Actors and prostitutes shall pay half their earnings. The entire property of goldsmiths [who would be money-lenders too, as a rule] is to be confiscated". Half the poultry and pigs, a tenth of the cattle would be taken. Besides, the chief revenue collector was to solicit voluntary contributions. He would be helped by secret agents who would come forward in the guise of private persons to make heavy pseudo-contributions, on the same principle as seeding a collection-plate today. Titles and insignia (umbrella, turban, &c.) would be sold — but without any other privileges, office, or state property. Property of temples, religious institutions, and monastic orders was to be carried off by the proper minister (*devatādhyakṣa*) under guise of safekeeping; so also the property of deceased persons. Miracles were to be invented for mulcting the credulous, new cult objects set up by disguised spies in state pay. This is confirmed by a statement of Patañjali (on Pāṇ 5.3.99) that "the Mauryans had set up cult images (*arcāḥ*) for the sake of cash gain (*hiraṇyārthibhiḥ*)". Spies were to trade with genuine merchants and then cause themselves to be robbed by other colleagues as soon as a certain amount of cash had been collected in the transaction. The merchant's wares and cash might be taken away while he was drunk at a *samāja*. Quarrels would be fomented between two parties, both suspected of harbouring ideas dangerous to the state; one would be poisoned by spies, the other accused, property of both confiscated for the treasury. False accusations "only against the seditious and the wicked,

never against others", robbery, murder could also be special measures when the treasury was in need. There is no mention of a state loan or national debt. The clearest proof that the need arose for revenue beyond the normal taxes is the progressive debasement and cruder minting (fig. 33) of Mauryan punch-marked coins. Cāṇakya was himself credited by the medieval Ceylonese Buddhist commentator Dhammapāla with having added enough copper to make eight *kārṣāpaṇas* out of one; Asoka's coins are 2/3 or more copper, according to modern chemical analysis. The *kārṣāpaṇa* means a copper coin to Pāli commentators and to brahmin scriptures like the *smṛtis* of Manu and Yājñavalkya; this incidentally proves that those sacred works are later than the *Arthaśāstra* which is supposed to have borrowed from them. The *Arthaśāstra* economy was practicable only in a period of expanding trade and production, hence doomed to fail with the cessation of such expansion into paying territory. We have seen that even the generous and pious Asoka could not exempt Lummini, the village of the Sakyan Teacher's birth, entirely from taxes. There were sound economic reasons for Asoka's change to rule by morality, from the precepts of a book which not even its greatest admirer could accuse of being moral.

7.6. The *Arthaśāstra* does not make caste the primary basis for classes. One prominent upper class is covered without specification of caste by the dual term *paura-jānapada*. The first component means 'city dweller', the second, 'inhabitant of the district'. The two are not completely antithetical designations for urban and rural citizens, for every *janapada* district had its city headquarters, every city its *janapada* hinterland. The context makes it clear that these are not just any residents, but propertied citizens who had a strong following (presumably from tribal splinters), enjoyed a special position with respect to the state, and constituted public opinion. The opinion was not expressed by plebiscite or vote, but ascertained by spies and provocateurs (*Arth.* 1.13) who served in a way for the modern public opinion poll, Mass Observation, and sample-survey techniques. The respect and consideration they obtained from the state as a class is seen from the injunction

(*Arth.* 1.9) that a minister should be chosen from the *jānapadas*, i.e. should not be from another district. This indicates that every *janapada* administrative unit had its own board or council of ministers, as reported by Megasthenes. In *Arth.* 8.1, Kauṭalya maintains against Parāśara that the rural *jānapadas* should be wooed as stronger than the urban *pauras*. The king has to set apart one eighth of the entire day specially, to deal with the affairs of the *paura-jānapadas* in court (*Arth.* 1.19). If discontented, they could destroy a new ruler (*Arth.* 13.5). From *Arth.* 1.13, it is clear that these solid citizens paid the standard tax of a sixth on produce, whereas the peasant on the *sītā* land was lucky if he ultimately managed to retain a half for himself, for the basic tax there was a fourth, with all sorts of special dues in addition. The question must therefore be asked: how did these citizens make their living? For those in the city the income might have originated in financing trade and manufacture. For the greater part, however, the income rested directly or indirectly upon surplus produced on the land, which must be specially considered.

The sixth-part payment on produce shows that the *jānapadas* paid taxes according to the *rāṣṭra* scheme. This is defined in *Arth.* 2.15 for each (local) keeper of royal store-houses (*koṣṭhāgārādhyakṣa*), who naturally gathered all payments in kind, arranged for grain loans, cleaning, pounding, milling, and conducted a powerful trade in the accumulated goods. Elsewhere, in the *Arth.* as in all other classical Sanskrit literature, *rāṣṭra* means 'country' in both senses of the word, sometimes contrasted to *durga*, which is a fortified city. The *rāṣṭra* tax was collected under ten separate heads (*Arth.* 2.15) : The collective tax on joint villages, *piṇḍakara*; the sixth portion of all grain produce, *ṣaḍbhāga;* army provisions *senābhaktam* ; 'sacrifice tax' *bali* — the oldest of all taxes, originating in gifts to the chief for communal sacrifices for the tribe, as in *RV.* 10.173.6, but charged as a matter of custom (*e.g.* Rummindei) whether sacrifices were performed or not; an annual cash tax, or a tax on perennial produce such as fruit, under the title *kara*, which later means tax in general; *utsaṅga* =ceremonial gifts to the king on the birth of a son, and the like, or a supertax (*Uebersteuer*, Meyer) ; a supplementary tax

pārśvam (Meyer, *Nebengaben*); damage tax (for grain lost by cattle trespass) *pārihīṇakam;* gifts of fabrics, &c., *aupāyanikam;* and a *kauṣṭheyakam* tax which was either a charge for the storehouse or a special tax for use of royal tanks, groves and the like.

These taxes show the formal influence of Aryan tribal custom, with the tribal chief or tribal authority replaced by the paramount sovereign and his bureaucracy. The *paura-jānapadas* had a recent tribal past. The reader must again be reminded that *janapada* means 'the locality of a tribe'. The large patriarchal family groups into which such tribes had split up to form *rāṣṭra* territory still preserved many ancient customs in spite of the new agrarian production which had caused the fragmentation. The *jānapada* magnate was not a feudal or private landlord, but the head of such a large band. Local custom and group tradition gave him control of the surplus produced by the members, with or without the help of śūdra helots. But he had begun to trade in this surplus. The profits were converted gradually into his private property and the extent to which the entourage would benefit thereby depended more upon his will than theirs. The seeds of landlordism and 'Asiatic' production were certainly present in this situation, but not the full later growth. The former compulsory military service had been commuted by the 'army provisions tax'. Such *paura-jānapadas* were the upper class in the 'free cities' of Megasthenes and, to a considerable extent, managed their own affairs; the more so because the local ministers and officials were recruited from amongst them. The monarch was advised (*Arth.* 5.1) to curb the leading citizens (*mukhyāḥ*) and the most powerful district officials (*mahāmātra*) by every conceivable form of treachery and intrigue. The dangerous magnate could be assassinated, poisoned, ambushed or murdered when sent on some trifling expedition with command of a weak force, or falsely accused by provocateurs. He might be killed by his own son or brother, instigated thereto by promise of the inheritance — which promise need not be kept. Two dangerous citizens might be knocked off at once by accusing one of murdering the other, though the actual deed was by royal agents. It follows that the Asokan change to

rule by morality was revolutionary, in that it freed the most powerful class within the state of the constant pressure, and permitted its expansion.

This high citizenry had its counterpart at the other end, a free working class without claim to land. The manager of crown lands is advised to let out the unsown land to share-croppers on half-share of the produce. Some of the *paura-jānapadas* pushed into the waste, cleared land with their own capital investment, and could find a few share-croppers for the labour. Sometimes, this was encouraged by the state, for *Arth.* 2.24 (just after the reference to *ardhasītikas*) suggests that the land be assigned for a quarter, fifth, or other suitably low share to *sva-vīryopajīvinaḥ*. The word was interpreted to mean "those who have nothing to contribute but the labour of their bodies", but is better understood as "those who live by valour", *i.e.* unemployed professional soldiers and the like (cf. E. H. Johnston, *JRAS* 1929, pp. 77-102). Retired officers from the army were attached to boards of revenue officials (*Arth.* 2.9) as a check against peculation. There could be no question of landlordism nor of feudal practices. According to tribal custom, land had been territory, apportioned by the chief or council of elders, whose authority had now passed to the king-emperor and his *jānapada* magistrates. So, the concept of private property in land was tenuous. In *Arth.* 3.5-7, which deals with inheritance of property, land is not mentioned at all, nor the house; joint households on ancestral lands were the rule. The Greeks were justified in thinking that all land belonged to the state, or the king. Nevertheless, *Arth.* 3.9 speaks of sale of plots, with kinsmen, neighbours, and wealthy persons to be present at the transfer of title, and the property delimited in the presence of village elders. The property, including buildings, was always to be auctioned, and sum bid over the royal valuation, as well as the sales tax were to be handed over to the royal treasury by the successful bidder. Such transfer is not on the same level as the sale of goods and seems at most to apply to house-plots and gardens. Similarly, the injunction (*Arth.* 2.1 *et al.*) that residents of a tax-paying village could not shift to a non-taxpaying village indicates the emergence of some private enterprise on land, outside tribal

and *sītā* territory. State enterprise such as the settlement of *sītā* lands is the main business of the *Arthaśāstra* state; its purpose is given clearly as relief of the *paura-jānapadas* from extra burdens.

The *ardha-sītika* half-share-croppers could not have existed for uncultivated state lands alone. This is proved by the fact that their wives, as also those of shepherds are held responsible for debts contracted by the husband (*Arth.* 3.11) whereas the wife is not thus responsible in any other case without her own consent. These wives of *ardha-sītikas* were automatically freed (*Arth.* 3.13) from obligation of servitude (as were other bondsmen) if made to perform certain types of degrading service. It follows that some *ardha-sītikas* worked on privately held land, while their wives performed some labour such as weeding, pounding the grain, or carrying water. The position is similar to work done for landlords by the lowest class of share-tenants in Bihar to the present day; the roots of the system undoubtedly go back to the *Arthaśāstra* period, while the half-share system was further strengthened during the feudal period, especially by the Muslims, who began to settle their soldiers regularly on the land. Thus the *jānapada* would have a decent margin between the *rāṣṭra* tax paid to the state and the half-share he could collect from the tenant, even after deducting capital expenditure, supplementary taxes, and tolls. However, he had no rights except occupancy in the land, and was still too tightly bound (in the older settlements) by custom to be a free entrepreneur. The *Arth.* ploughmen (3.14) were grouped in societies or guilds, like the merchants. To this must be added the fact that the population was not enough to supply more than a few casual *ardha-sītikas*, especially as the newly opened *sītā* lands could be settled on a permanent basis on better terms for the actual cultivator. We know from Megasthenes that the "free cities" also let out their *janapada* lands to *śūdra*-georgoi for the standard rent, so that there was not intolerable pressure upon the land before Asoka. The inevitable conflict between the all-powerful state and a new private settlement of waste lands was one of the ultimate causes for the Asokan reform.

7.7. This brings us to the foundations of Mauryan pro-

duction, carefully described in *Arth.* 2.1, namely the settlement of uncleared waste lands and their direct exploitation under royal officers. All land was measured, its yield of every crop estimated for every class of soil, type of irrigation, and rain-

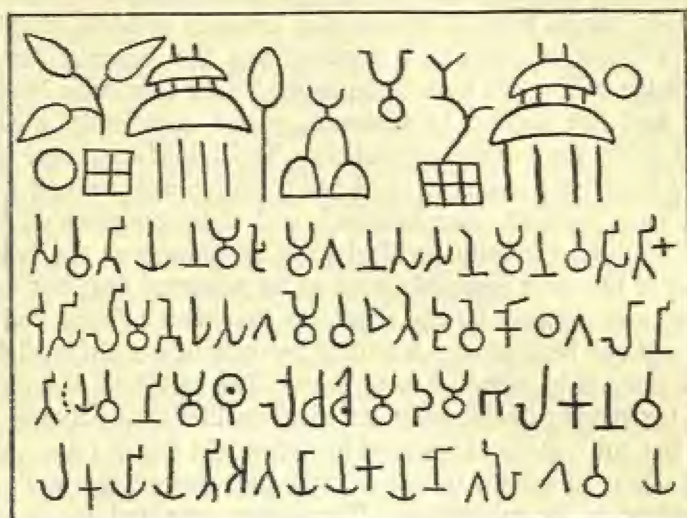


Fig 34. Mauryan copper plate (Sohgaura) giving instructions to the *mahāmātras* regarding two state granaries, which are the two structures at the top.

fall. Every royal storehouse and state granary* had a rain-gauge (*Arth.* 2.5) which helped in the classification (*Arth.* 2.24). The older lands developed from various former tribal territories, each with a headquarters city, counted as the *rāṣṭra* of the *paura-jānapadas*, with lighter taxes, formerly paid to the chief now replaced by the emperor. "A king with slender treasury will only eat up the *paura-jānapadas*" (*Arth.* 2.1), shows that their taxes were insufficient to run the state of that

*The Mauryan granaries have been attested by the archaeological record, namely the Sohgaura copper plate (fig. 34) giving instructions to the officials that controlled two such granaries near Sāvatthi; cf. J. F. Fleet, *JRAS.* 1907.509-532; *ibid.* G. A. Grierson 683-5; different reading and interpretation by B. B. Barua: *ABORI* 11 (1930), 32-48. Modern state granaries were not better supplied or managed during the period of food rationing in India. Note the crescent-on-arches Mauryan crest and the two granaries themselves shown in fig. 34.

period and the *Arthaśāstra* model. New conquests do not help directly, for it is emphatically laid down that a conquered ruler and his officials should, whenever possible, be left as they were; nothing is said of any special tribute, beyond the loot gathered in the first flush of victory. Even conquest, therefore, was for the purpose of settling new territory hitherto unsettled.

Villages of between a hundred and five hundred families of *Śūdra* cultivators were to be formed, with territories between one and two leagues in diameter, settled sufficiently close to each other for mutual protection. The boundaries were carefully drawn by landmarks. Administrative units would be of ten, two hundred, four hundred, and eight hundred villages; the last had a heavily fortified town headquarters; the boundaries of this new *janapada* were to be protected (against forest tribes and raiders) by the army, for the śūdra villager had not the right to bear arms. A trifling amount of uncultivated land was granted to priests free of taxes. The rest was assigned to the tax-paying holder only for his own lifetime. Anyone who did not cultivate land assigned to him would find it taken away, and given to others, unless he had just cleared the land preparatory to its cultivation. Taxes were remitted for a while when a new settlement had been made, but decidedly heavy when cultivation had begun to pay. Not less than a quarter of the produce was the king's share, generally enhanced by water taxes. The whole work was supervised by royal officials: accountants, superintendents, registrars, veterinary and ordinary physicians and so on; any land assigned to these was only for life, not to be transferred by mortgage or sale. Finally, land not so cultivated could be leased out to village labourers (*grāmabhṛtaka*), or to traders. The king was to be a complete paternal despot to these settlers. This can be said as well of all later periods in Indian history, and did not depend upon *sītā* cultivation. Paternalism is the expression of small scale production, despotism of the underlying stratum of passive, unresisting villagers. Of course, it was much easier to be a despot in practice while claiming a paternal attitude. Mining operations, timber, elephant forests were royal monopolies like fisheries, reservoirs, trade in vegetable produce; the king would set up trade routes and market centres.

These śūdra settlers were enticed from other places, or deported from the king's own overpopulated cities. This should explain the 150,000 people who were *apavuḍhe* during Asoka's Kaliṅga war. The system could not have originated with the Mauryans, hence must belong to the late Śiśunāga and Nanda period, and been most extensively practised along the river, rather than along the old road past Himalayan foothills. Thus Megasthenes would see mostly crown *sītā* lands if he went to Patna by the logical route, down the Ganges; the *śūdra-karṣakas* were his placid gêōrgoi. A rigid system of costly passports (*Arth.* 2.34) and the frontier guards at every *janapada* made it impossible for the cultivator to leave his district, while the village headmen and registrars were responsible for his not emigrating except to another tax-paying village.

In fact, there was no escape for the proletarian from a crown village. He could become an ascetic only after passing the age of procreation, and distribution of his property to other producers; otherwise he would be fined. Anyone taking to asceticism without provision for his wife and dependents was punished, as also anyone converting a woman to asceticism. This concerns only the *sītā* villages, as nuns had existed from the days of the Buddha. No ascetic other than one who had taken to individual renunciation (was not a proselyter) was allowed in these royal villages. No association or grouping of any sort was permitted except of higher caste people (very few in any case), or temporary bands for public works (such as dykes, or reservoirs). No public gathering-place for relaxation or building for amusement was permitted. "Actors, dancers, singers, musicians, reconteurs, bards are not to disturb the work. From the helplessness of the villages there comes concentration of the men upon their fields, hence increase of taxes, labour supply, wealth, and grain". (*Arth.* 2.1). The idiocy of village life was carefully fostered as a state economic measure; for the increased wealth which was hardly any use to the villager found its way into the hands of the state, which supplied him with cattle, tools, utensils on its own terms and charged heavily for irrigation or any special service. Here the *rāṣṭra* private villages were happier. The total interdict upon ascetics was publicly reversed by Asokan edicts.

One way of keeping the state monopoly of basic production was to forbid large-scale chattel slavery. Human beings were sold at the time of the *Arthaśāstra,* but in negligible proportion, being mostly specially trained house-slaves. Chattel slavery for basic production was completely ruled out by the regulations of *Arth.* 3.13. Only *mleccha* barbarians (which would include the Greeks) were not guilty of a crime if they sold their subjects (*prajā*, also 'children') into slavery or bound them over. Such *mlecchas* were in demand as entertainers and had access even to the inner royal apartments. "But never shall an Aryan be sold into slavery", not even a śūdra living as free as an Aryan. Every slave, penal included, was allowed to work out his ransom. Unclean work (specified in detail) could not be demanded from slaves; insistence upon such degradation immediately set the slave free. Rape by the master was a crime severely punished, besides freeing the slave automatically. The slaves had their own property inheritable by their relations, not by the master; their children were born free. The śūdra helot had come into his own, under state control, to make large-scale chattel slavery unnecessary for food production.

Private commodity production was not deliberately killed by the *Arthaśāstra,* which provided dwelling space for artizans and craftsmen in the western section of the nine into which each new *janapada* headquarters town was to be separated by three roads running east-west and three north-south. The guild-halls were to be built (*Arth.* 2.4) in spaces between other buildings. "Contracts are to be undertaken by men who can make due restitution, who have command over workmen, who can impose their opinion upon others, who work to their own plan, and who have authority in their guild. In case of difficulty, the guild shall be responsible for the advance made (of material)". Here the word 'guild' translates *śreṇī*, successor to the tribe (*saṃgha* cf. 11.1, simultaneously *kṣatriya-śreṇī* in Kamboja and Surāṣṭra) but smaller and less menacing. On the other hand, these are not merely workmen's guilds, for *śreṇī* regiments are mentioned in the army again and again. The chief of a *śreṇī*, as more dangerous than his band (*Arth.* 8.4) received a general's pay (*Arth.* 5.3) of 8000

silver *paṇas*. The *śreṇī* soldiers were superior (*Arth.* 9.2) to all but the hereditary standing army, and the professional mercenaries. The *śreṇī* recruits (*Arth.* 7.8; 7.14) could be rewarded with land which contained permanently hostile elements (*Arth.* 7.16), according to the consistent policy of playing off two dangers against each other. Thus the *śreṇī* of the time was an intermediate group between tribe and caste, whose members took to a general profession, but could also bear arms. They participated in social production, but were not depressed to the level of the śūdra worker, nor pushed into one of the four caste-classes. In *Arth.* 7.1, it is clearly stated that a land settled with *śreṇī* bands was as difficult a military proposition as one defended by natural obstacles and good forts.

> "Which is better (land for colonization), that which is settled by individuals, or by men in *śreṇī* associations? The one whose men are separate is better; for a (land) with disunited men may be exploited and the blandishments of an enemy count for nothing there. The other sort will not stand (fast under) a calamity (affecting the prince); the great fault of *śreṇī*-settled (land) is insurrection". (*Arth.* 7.11).

Thus some of the *śreṇī* colonized waste lands on their own, under arms, without being villagers or food-gathering savages. The book continues: "As for settling a land with the four castes, the one where the lowest castes predominate is better because it will permit all sorts of exploitation". Though the *śreṇīs* continued to function for centuries afterwards there was neither place nor livelihood for them in villages settled primarily by śūdra cultivators. The artisans who worked for others under contract were sometimes hired as unions without forming a *śreṇī* for *Arth.* 3.14 mentions group-employees (*saṃghabhṛtāḥ*) who were collectively responsible for fulfilment of the contract. The *śreṇī* which would necessarily be endogamous, as well as profit-sharing, does not seem to appear in the Megasthenes fragments, unless in guise of herdsmen-hunters, or artisan-traders, or both. In Pāli sources, *seni* and *seṇī* are confused with ambiguity between 'guild' and 'army', which fits the two uses of *śreṇī* in the *Arthaśāstra*.

These restrictions also made it impossible to supply the countryside by city commodity production, with increasing dis-

tances over the far-flung empire. The artisan-merchant could not obtain enough labour at profitable rates if the lowest drudge was paid cash by the state, the śūdra arbitrarily subject to deportation for royal *sītā* village settlements, while slave workers could not be bought cheaply. There was no doubt about the hostility of the pre-Asokan state (which built no resting-places on trade routes) to the trader. Says Kauṭalya, contradicting his teachers of the science, "No, the (king's) Frontier Guard (is the lesser evil as he) depends for his living upon gain arising from traders' merchandise. The traders, however, raise and lower (prices at sale and purchase) on the principle, a hundred *paṇas* for one *paṇa*, a hundred jars (return) for one jar. Thus do they make their livelihood". (*Arth.* 8.4). The only way, therefore, of supplying the village demand would be for production to move into the villages themselves. Then the remaining villages would rapidly be transformed to a standard productive type of virtually self-contained economy. Production increased vastly, but it was no longer COMMODITY production for exchange. The Magadhan control over metals had become shaky, for the pumpless south Bihar mines reached water-level, presumably somewhere about this period.[10] The south Indian metals were not easy to monopolize, as they were produced in tribal areas and brought in by the more daring pioneer traders. The moment production went to the villages, revenues from tolls and customs, as well as from the state monopolies disappeared. The self-sufficient, disarmed village now and hereafter became the normal unit of production that characterized India. This meant that the central administrative apparatus with its three vast, separate armies of soldiers, bureaucrats, and spies was unnecessary and impossible to maintain. The universal espionage of the *Arthaśāstra*, which kept everyone from the heir apparent to the lowest villager under observation, proves that its state had no real class basis beyond the bureaucracy. The peculations of bureaucratic officials were becoming increasingly difficult to check. "The chief collector (*samāhartṛ*) of revenue looks first to his own profit, and then to the king's, or destroys the king's gain altogether. In taking the property of others (as taxes) he diverts it according to his own sweet will" (*Arth.* 8.4). Three whole

chapters, *Arth.* 2.7-10 are devoted to the detection and punishment of corrupt officials, with the helpless confession that it was as difficult to trace their embezzlement as to discover when a fish drank of the water through which it swam.

At the root of it all was the economic fact that Magadhan rule had now expanded into far less profitable country, for no other soil compared in fertility with the Gangetic valley, particularly when it was first cleared of its forest. The ideal *janapada* land is described in *Arth.* 6.1 as follows :

"With fortifiable hills in the middle and on the frontiers; able to support itself, able to support other (districts) in case of need. Easy to defend, easily providing the necessities of life, hating (the king's) enemies, and with neighbours not too strong. Free from swamps, rocks, salt-impregnated land, uneven land, thorn thickets, savage beasts, and savage tribesmen. Lovely, furnished with *sītā* crown-lands, mineral wealth, elephant forests. Fit for cattle, human beings, with well-guarded herds, rich in herd-beasts, not watered by the rainfall alone. Well furnished with waterways and roads, and with trade goods of great value and variety, able to bear the army and taxes. With peasants who are dutiful, lords that are childish, a population mostly of the lower castes, and with men who are loyal and clean-lived—Such is the perfection as to the *janapada*".

This might fit the very best portions of Bihar, UP, Punjab, perhaps west Bengal, and stretches of coastal Gujarat, but hardly any other part of the country. Pre-Mauryan kings might have found such districts still open to conquest and settlements, but Candragupta's army certainly trod worse territory. The equally fertile but drier Punjab, occupied by earlier *paurajānapadas*, was not to be further exploited without costly irrigation. The south was forest-covered rock, where the Magadhan administration of *sītā* villages would be far too expensive.

Finally, the unwieldy system demanded the utmost physical exertion and impossible concentration of mind from its principal figure and symbol, the absolute monarch, as Asoka's declaration about reports proves.

"The (king's) day and night are to be divided into eight parts each by *nālikā* clocks [gnomons by day, perhaps hollow tubes that served as water-clocks at night]...Then, during the first eighth of the day, let him (the king) listen to reports on measures of defence and income and expenditure. In the second, he should look to the

matters concerning the *paura-jānapadas*. During the third, devote himself to his bath, meal, and studies (of the vedas). In the fourth, he should settle the acceptance of gold, and the matters concerning administrators. In the fifth, he should consult with (and pass orders to) his council of ministers [which means the various distant *janapada* ministers] by letters, and take cognizance of spies' and secret reports. In the sixth, he might devote himself to pleasure, or to discussions of policy. In the seventh, he should review the elephants, cavalry, (armed) chariots, and armed forces. In the eighth, he must think about conquest (aggression) with his commander-in-chief. At eve, he should say the evening prayers. During the first (eighth) of the night, let him receive the secret spies. During the second, the bath, meal, and study [of the vedas or the like]. In the third, he should go to bed to the accompaniment of instrumental music, and sleep through the fourth and fifth. Awakened in the sixth by the sound of music, let him meditate upon science [here the *Arthaśāstra*, in all probability], and his immediate duties. In the seventh, he must take counsel (or try recitation of formulae for success), and charge the secret spies with instructions. In the eighth, he should receive in company of the sacrificial-priest, teacher, and priest, blessings by formulae, and see his physician, chief cook, and astrologer. Then let him proceed to the audience chamber after circumambulation (to the right) of a cow with calf, and a bull. Or otherwise, he might divide up the night and day according to his own strength and tastes, for his duties". (*Arth.* 1.19).

Add to this the unremitting vigilance necessary against poison, assassins, usurpation (*Arth.* 1.20. 1.21, 1.17-18, &c.). It will be seen that the king's life could not be easy if the state were to be properly administered. Later kings preferred greater self-indulgence with smaller kingdoms and less power.

The real Asokan conversion was not merely of the king but of the whole system. State-dominated commodity production yielded place to villages supplying primarily their own internal demand of food and the few indispensable manufactures. The expensive state mechanism of force was reduced by enlisting the aid of religion. The *Arth.* uses brahmin ritual casually; fees for *yajña* sacrifices are regulated (3.14) with fines if the priest should not fulfil the agreement, just as for breach of any secular contract. The "ascetics" are used primarily for spying, as people so disguised had access to all classes and were the only spies who could penetrate the wilderness where dangerous *āṭavika* savages lived. There was a fine of 100 silver pieces (*Arth.* 3.20) if Sakyan, Ājīvika, or similar

monks were fed at a feast for the manes of departed ancestors. This measure (like the fine for conversion of women to asceticism) incidentally dates the *Arthaśâstra* to a period before Asoka whose generosity to both sects was publicly recorded and continued by many successors. Princesses of the Asokan court became Buddhist nuns, according to tradition. The *Arth.* is not otherwise interested in the monkhood except for spies disguised as monks. The dwellings of ascetics, like those of the lowest caste (*caṇḍāla*) were to be outside the royal cities (2.4). A regulation ensured fair division of room between the ascetics in such *ārāmas*, should there be a dispute. Thus the Asokan measures are radical, even revolutionary, concessions to the new life. This was a symptom as well as cause of the ultimate collapse of the highly centralized administration which was never abandoned in theory. The army was no longer essential, as India had been conquered virtually to its logical frontiers — wherever there was anything profitable to conquer. Local garrisons would suffice to police the *janapadas*, to the extent of defence against banditry and preventing desertion of the villagers. Such garrisons could not prevent foreign adventurers making fresh inroads, to the very heart of the empire, as happened within about sixty years of Asoka's death. Vinaya rules for admission demonstrate that the Buddhist Order no longer offended caste and the state apparatus. Ordination of runaway slaves or helots was declared invalid, which made it safe to let the monks enter crown villages. Criminals too were forbidden entry into the *saṃgha*. Yet Sopāka, from the lowest caste ('dog-eater' *Caṇḍāla*) had been a leading disciple of the Buddha himself while the impressive conversion of the murderous brigand Aṃgulīmāla had been admired by the startled king Pasenadi. The ascetic preachers had now become far cheaper agents of law and order than the all-powerful stipendiary officials backed by well-paid soldiers and checked by still better-paid spies. The foundations initiated by Asoka received their heaviest contributions, as at Sāñcī, from the very traders whom the pre-Asokan state had watched, squeezed, and repressed with all its resourceful might. The king and his people found new common ground in the *dhamma*, a fresh class basis for what was left of the state.



Notes and references :

1. For Taxila's submission, Alexander's conquests and foreign sources, *CAI* and *ITM* remain competent surveys.

2. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar : *Beginnings of south Indian history* (Madras 1918), pp. 81-103, for the rather thin evidence, beaten out still thinner; also Soma Sundara Desikar, *IHQ*. 4, 1928, 135-145. It is not possible to discover from such works, or V. R. Rāmchandra Dikṣitar's translation of the *Silappadikāram* (Oxford, 1939), or his *Studies in Tamil literature and history* (London) when the plough was first used in South India.

3. For Mauryan pockets, *IA*. 19.55-62; *ABORI* 23.510-14.

4. The Dryden translation as revised by A. H. Clough in 1864 and reprinted in the Modern Library (New York, undated); pp. 801-854 has been used. Gangaridan is my emendation for the erroneous 'Gandaritan'.

5. J. Prinsep's discovery was described by him in two clear articles, *JASB*. 1937-8, well worth reading even today.

6. For the Asokan edicts, *Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*—I, E. Hultzsch (Oxford 1925; for the Govt. of India); *RE*. and *PE*. refer to rock and pillar edicts respectively. E. Senart : *Les inscriptions de Piyadasi* (2 vol., Paris 1881-6); F. W. Thomas, *JRAS*. 1914, 383-395; *ibid*. 1916, 677-698. Dharmānand Kosambī, *IA*. 39, 1910, 217.

7. Journal of the Archaeological Survey, Hyderabad, vol. II.

8. For the *Arthaśāstra* text, I have relied mainly upon the edition of T. Ganapati Sāstri, Trivandrum 1923 onwards, in 3 vols. (Trivandrum Skt. Series nos. 79, 80, 82), rather than that of its discoverer R. Shāmaśāstry, 2nd ed. Mysore 1924. Shāmaśāstry's three-volume word-index to the *Arthaśāstra* (Mysore 1925) is indispensable. For the vital section 2.1, the Pāṭan Jain Bhāṇḍār palm-leaf fragment with commentary of Yogghama has been edited and printed (but apparently not yet published) by Muni Jinavijaya, who kindly presented me with the printed forms. The standard translation of J. J. Meyer : *Das altindische Buch vom Welt-und Staatsleben* (Leipzig 1926) seems indispensable, though not always acceptable; better in any case than R. Shāmaśāstry's (3rd. ed. Mysore 1929) in English. The imposing and laboured studies by F. Breloer : *Kauṭalīya-Studien* (Bonn 1926, 1928) seem useless and misleading to me simply because no attention has been paid to the change of context in social production while interpreting juristic formulae.

9. The reference to Pliny, *ITM* 34, for other large armies in India, quoting supposedly from Megasthenes, seems unreliable, though by the time of Pliny such armies had unquestionably developed along with the kingdoms. The Pāṇḍyas were connected by the Greeks, in Megasthenes's report, with Pandaia, daughter of Kṛṣṇa-Herakles, upon whom the father begot progeny for populating and ruling the south, then matriarchal, as it remained for centuries afterwards.

10. Evidence for very efficient working of the mines and reduction of the ore in antiquity (not yet dated) is given by J. A. Dunn : *Memoirs* of the Geological Survey of India, LXIX pt. 1, 1937 (pp. 3, 54-5).

CHAPTER VIII

INTERLUDE OF TRADE AND INVASIONS

WHEN the Mauryan empire fell apart, foreign invaders conquered and successively ruled the northern sector (the two great river basins, except Bengal), while the southern remained mostly subject to indigenous rule. The basic reason for this difference was that the plough-using village dominated the economy of the part conquered by foreigners, who mainly looted the surplus gathered under the preceding rulers. The south (approximately the region south of the Narmadā) had still to be covered by such passive unresisting villages. It had prominent guilds, while trade with vigorous forest-dwellers paid very well, but agriculture in the Deccan seems post-Mauryan. The production in a closed village economy is not commodity production. The increase of virtually self-contained villages meant that commodity production per head — the *density* of commodity production — would fall though the total production rose. This simple fact explains the ruin of empires whose prosperity resulted in the growth of the characteristic Indian village settlements.

8.1. Mauryan armies had overrun the whole country. Their ships had explored the entire coast from the south of the Ganges to that of the Indus. Missionaries and trade had reached Ceylon, Asia minor and were soon to reach China. Far more significant than these achievements was the development of the village as basic productive unit in the north. Slavery never preponderated over Indian production as it had in the Greek and Roman. The great patriarchal household was not the equivalent of the Roman villa, a feudal manor, nor of a plantation like the Brazilian *casa grande*. The heaviest Mauryan settlement was in the two alluvial plains of the Ganges and the Indus. Densely forested Bengal and Assam still remained to be opened up, as also the long coastal strip. These regions had a heavy rainfall and needed more iron than could then be supplied by Magadha. Puṣyagupta, Candragupta Maurya's vaiśya governor, began the construction of a great dam near Junāgaḍh, to build a reservoir which was kept up for about a thousand years afterwards; but we hear of nothing comparable further south. The pockets of *āṭavika* savages that existed in the north dwindled as food-gathering territory shrank under the plough. It was no longer necessary to ambush the forest-dwellers or kill them off with poisoned liquor as suggested in *Arth.* 13.3. If rival monarchs recruited them as auxiliaries to their armies, bribed them to make sorties, or uprisings against neighbours (as recommended in the *Arth.*), it further helped terminate their food-gathering economy. The tribes that interacted with society survived only as castes. Those enrolled later into productive society were in general progressively lower in the economic, and therefore in the social scale. There was plenty of room for new village settlement. The average yield became less (though compensated by somewhat improved methods of cultivation) as deforestation increased. There was not room enough for both food-producers and food-gatherers in the northern plains. The southern situation was totally different, because dense cultivation was impossible. Agrarian settlement, which could at best take place in scattered pockets in the Deccan, really began after the Mauryans. There, the Mauryans had held thinly-occupied trade routes, interrupted by large stretches of hilly

forest. Any conquests south of Mysore had been given up. The occupation petered out in a chain of outposts among the aborigines with megalithic culture.

This basic difference in the means of production, the difference between long-standing and fresh village settlements, is reflected in the different political history of the two major sections. The roles of religion and of caste also differ, though both tended to uniformity with the spread of villages all over the country. Older productive units such as the *śreṇī* guild, which had no function in the closed village, continued to appear prominently in the south after they had shrunk to negligible proportions in the north.

The chronology[1] of this period is still difficult to establish beyond dispute, so that it is useful to review the names of kings and their approximate dates. Soon after the death of Asoka, there arose in the south the royal house of the Sātavāhanas (or Sātakaṇis, Sanskritized as Śātavāhana, Śālivahana, and Śātakarṇi). Their original location might have been about the present Bellary district, but they remain associated with Āndhra territory during their later days of glory. Sātavāhana deposits (i.e. with the rouletted ware) are the first clear traces of civilizations in the south though pre-Mauryan (including the megalithic) traits continued for some time, to pass away finally when the Sātavāhanas were firmly established. Roman trade goods in Sātavāhana levels (found at Kolhāpūr, Karhāḍ, and near Pondichery) enable us to assess[2] the importance and the range of trade in luxury articles by confirming the *Periplus* account. The rouletted ware is copied from Arretine pottery between 50 B.C. and 50 A.D. When the age of the Antonines ended with the turmoil of civil wars after the death of Commodus, the Sātavāhana kingdom also declined. It had produced enough village agriculture to pass out of history. Ptolemy's king Siro-Ptolemaios is identified with Vāsiṭhīputa siri-Puḷumāyi.[3]

The name Sātakaṇi appears to be aboriginal. The factors[4] are two Indo-Austric words, *sada* = horse, and *kon* = son, which would indicate a horse-totem of the non-Aryans. The formation cannot go back to pre-Aryan days, as the horse, which appears on many Sātavāhana coins, is an Aryan inno-

vation for India. The proper Sanskritization of sāta is sapti (horse), which actually appears in a late purāṇa. Saptikarṇa would indicate a split-totem, 'horse-ear'. However, the terminations *karṇa* and *vāhana* can both indicate "descent from"; this could make the people identical with Asoka's Satiyaputas. These kings, however, performed *yajñas* and supported brahmins as well as Buddhists. At least one claimed to be "the unique brahmin", showing how the priesthood helped bring a class structure into the tribal south. Correspondingly, the influence of Śātavāhana trade upon the brahmin purāṇas appears in their extraordinary geographical knowledge buried under descriptions by gods and goddesses of supposedly imaginary regions. When J. H. Speke first discovered the sources of the Nile, he took with him a map drawn from the purāṇas, by Lieutenant Wilford[3] of Bombay which turned out to represent the inner African local names with startling accuracy. The purāṇa geography, however, makes a sad contrast with the clear Chinese itineraries and the still clearer descriptions by Arab travellers. A place had to be considered a sacred pilgrimage before the brahmin would condescend to record it, hidden with a twisted name under thick encrustations of myth. In their search for such *tīrthas*, Indians (at various times) not only penetrated the jungles of Assam and the south, but also worshipped a natural-gas flame at Baku. The impulse to explore, at a maximum during the Sātavāhana epoch, subsided as the rustic mentality grew with the number of villages. Pilgrimage and study of scripture were about the only causes for travel not discouraged by full-blown 'Hinduism'.

At about the same time as the earlier Sātavāhanas, one Khāravela, the third king of his line left a 17-line inscription (now sadly damaged) in the Mahānadī region, Asoka's freshest sphere of influence. The king, who remains otherwise unknown, raided a great portion of India, including Magadha, Pāṇḍya and Sātakaṇi territory. He was a Jain, which hindered his military career no more than Buddhism that of Harṣa or Jenghis Khan. These non-violent religions never prevented large wars, which arose from deep economic causes. The military feats, including the recovery from the Magadhan king

Bahasatimita (perhaps a Śuṅga Bṛhaspati-mitra, or Puṣyamitra) of a Jain relic taken away by Nanda, king of Magadha (103 or 300 years earlier) are of the standard type. So also, feeding innumerable Jain *arhats* and brahmins. The construction of temples and excavation of over a hundred caves (many of which have been found) is mentioned. The remarkable feature is that the total expenditure is given for each set of public works, in hundreds of thousands of *paṇas*; the coins were debased, but the amounts remain considerable, nevertheless. Perhaps the most interesting performance in this epigraph, whose readings and interpretation have been disputed endlessly (I follow B. M. Barua, *Old Brāhmī inscriptions of the Udayagiri and Khaṇḍagiri caves*, Calcutta 1929) is the extension at great cost of an ancient canal from the Tosali (?) road. The canal had been originally dug by king Nanda, which shows that, even before Asoka and the Mauryans, the Magadhan kings had pushed regular settlements towards Kaliṅga. But Khāravela drained the 'Dismal Swamp' (*timiradaha*) into the Lāṅgala river, after 113 years of growth, which shows—with his extensive repairs to reservoirs and embankments, that regular cultivation had come to stay in Kaliṅga. Yet his memory was completely lost.

Khāravela's raid on Magadha must have been made at about the time of the first Śuṅga monarch Puṣyamitra, who had succeeded the last Mauryan by assassination, but could not rule the whole empire. The family had held the viceroyship at Ujjain or the neighbouring province Vidiśā under the Mauryans. The name *śuṅga* is a recognized brahmin (Bharadvāja) *gotra*, and has been taken to denote that the dynasty was brahmin. This seems unlikely. The kṣatriyas and vaiśyas still had *gotras*, at this time. The extensive trade, migrations, and raids of the times, absorption of new people, meant that the old *gotra* system would disappear except among the brahmins, who remained conservative in form. The old vedic custom of adopting the brahmin into the Aryan tribe meant the creation of a new *gotra*, usually the same as that of the tribal chief at whose sacrifices the brahmin officiated. Now, with non-Aryan chiefs and traders to be won over, the rule was

neatly inverted, so that the kṣatriya and vaiśya would take on the *gotra* of their house-priests (Brough 195-6). The house-priest of the last Śuṅga was a Kaṇvāyana (also a Bharadvāja *gotra*), so that the Śuṅgas had a clan-name not that of the *purohita*, but could have been kṣatriyas nevertheless. The Sātavāhana custom of reporting the mother's *gotra* name e.g. Gotamīputa siri Satakaṇi may, but need not, indicate some remnant of original mother-right; for it can be explained as due to polygamy. The mother's gentile name served to distinguish the son from his stepbrothers, while showing respectable birth on both sides.

The Śuṅgas tried to restore a dead rite, the ancient vedic horse-sacrifice.[4] For Puṣyamitra, this must have seemed a necessity, as new invaders thrust into the empire he had usurped. However, the reputation some Buddhist works gave him of persecuting Asoka's religion signifies at most that brahmins were helped to revive banned practices. The splendid Buddhist structures at Bhārhūt and many at Sāñcī belong to the Śuṅga period. The horse-sacrifice proved ineffective, as the Yavana raided well into the Śuṅga home territory along the Ujjain trade-route. Casual references indicate that Greeks had invested Sāketa, and penetrated perhaps as far as Patna. This particular Yavana seems to have been Menander, the most successful descendant of Euthydemos, transient ruler over wide but shifting territory. Demetrios, son of Euthydemos, had also 'conquered India'—not quite so far as Alexander. The great Antiochus had to be content for his conquest of India with gifts from Subhagasena, "king of the Indians", who had ruled only the Mauryan province of the Kābūl valley. Menander is the king Milinda of Sāgala (Sialkot, Alexander's furthest east) in the *Milindapañha* = "Questions Of King Milinda", a Pāli Buddhist text discovered in Ceylon which (with citations) alone preserved his memory for literate Indians. This particular line of Greek invaders was terminated about 75 B.C. by the Śakas, who had earlier settled the Indus delta. Meanwhile, the Euthydemids had lost their original Bactrian kingdom to Eucratides and his successors, who also pushed into the unhappy Indus valley, followed by the Śakas Maues, Azes and

others. The Kuṣāṇas ended the procession when they conquered Bactria, then Kaśmīr, and northern India. This was a more enduring occupation. Their full empire is regarded as beginning in 78 A.D. with the coronation of Kaniṣka — a date that has been heavily contested. The era of 78 A.D. is still current as the Śālivahana-Śaka. The Kuṣāṇas adopted Indian ways more successfully than Menander or any other invaders before them, striking coins with the image of the Buddha, or of Śiva, and other deities. Their gigantic stūpas were admired by Chinese pilgrims in the seventh and Albirūnī in the 11th century A.D. Their retention of empire till Vāsudeva (about 200 A.D.) — with the usual diminution — seems to have been due to a better method of continued surplus extraction than the casual raids of the rest. The provinces were assigned to satraps with full powers, perhaps on the still remembered Achaemenid and Perso-Greek model, but with a crucial difference. The Persian satraps, though nobles, were technically slaves (*bandaka*) of the King Of Kings, subject to arbitrary recall and summary punishment without trial, at the autocrat's will. It is not always clear who the overlord was for the Indian satraps, e.g. Hagāṇa, Hagāmāṣa, Rājula at Mathurā. The Kuṣāṇa satraps wielded full powers, had the right of succession in their own lines and in some cases assumed the title of *rājan* at the same time. Vanaṣpara and Kharapallāṇa are known simply as 'Great Satraps' by the Sārnāth inscription dated 3 of the Kuṣāṇa era. The Scythian descendants of Caṣṭana, including Rudradāman (circa 150 A.D.), took the title of king and fought wars on their own account, while remaining Satraps. What tribute they paid is not known, but the title has a tributary implication. The *khakharāta* Nahapāna who also styled himself satrap and king at Ujjain was defeated by Gotamīputa Sātakaṇi. Gotamīputra's son Vāsiṭhiputa Puḷumāyi fought and lost two battles with Rudradāman. Though they could not have belonged to the same caste, race, tribe, or linguistic group, this or another Vāsiṭhiputa Śri-Śātakarṇi was Rudradāman's son-in-law.

The period does not end with the stabilization of Sātavāhanas in the south and Kuṣāṇas in the north, as it would have

done, had it simply been a matter of overthrowing kingdoms based upon resisting villages. Numerous local dynasties (*DKA.* 72-3), also under the stimulus of trade sprang up in portions that had been wilderness or undeveloped territory. At least four Nāgas became kings. The seven Gardabhilas seem, from the termination, to have been Bhīls, a tribe whose remnants have yet to move completely out of the food-gatherer stage. The thirteen Puṣyamitras (or Puṣpamitras) are known only by their generic name ; the Hūṇas and Hārahūṇas were apparently White Huns (Ephthalites). Skandagupta crushed the former tribe towards the middle of the 5th century, but had greater difficulty with the latter. The (ten) Ābhīra kings stem from the tribal invaders who developed into the modern Ahīr pastoral caste. With these arose some tribes like the Yaudheyas, 'exterminated' by Rudradāman, yet able to strike their own coins two centuries or more later. The modern Johiyās of Bahāwalpūr, on the right bank of the Sutlej, seem to be their descendants. At the same time, the extreme south produced three kingdoms : the Cera in Malabar, Pāṇḍya at the tip of the peninsula, and Coḷa on the southeastern coast. By the second century A.D., they had had village settlements, wars, brahmin priests, their own poetry (the Śaṅgam period), and Buddhist monasteries. Any fresh 'universal empire' would henceforth necessarily have had to make conquests of a type entirely different from the Mauryan.

This welter of contending tribes, kings, invaders proves that new villages yielded a first surplus that could support raiding armies. It made the possessors of those villages still more ambitious. At times, there also came into existence new tribes, perhaps displaced from older homes, or formed out of diverse elements, but now food-producing *gaṇas*. Among these the Mālava *gaṇa* founded an era, apparently the same as the Vikrama or the *kṛta* era beginning in 57 B.C., and connected, if legendary tradition[7] be any guide, with the defeat of Śāhānuśāhī invaders who had killed the last Gardabhila king of Ujjain. These tribes (like the Yaudheyas) also patronized brahmins ; the patronage helped preserve the era and expand its mythical founder Vikrama into a universal *cakravartin*

emperor. No coin or inscription of his have ever been found, nor do the purāṇas mention him. The purāṇic lists cease to be empty as the dynasties just mentioned gradually receive numismatic confirmation. The find-spots of the coins also give some indication of royal territory.

8.2. The question of religion, sufficiently important even in the treatment of dynastic history, needs to be examined more closely. In decrying the role of superstition when it kept India backward, it must never be forgotten that priestly ritual and magic also helped bring civilization to any given locality. Such beliefs turned into fetters when the class-structure hardened. The first Ṛgvedic two-caste system made it possible to advance beyond the Indus basin. The four-caste system which had developed within Aryan Yajurvedic tribes laid the foundations of a class society which was more progressive than mutually exclusive warring tribes. The Greeks noted of our brahmins (Strabo ; Meg. 59) : "Their ideas about physical phenomena are very crude, for they are better in their actions than in their reasonings, inasmuch as their belief is in great measure based upon fables." These fables and a certain rigid discipline were helpful to impose upon savages, to initiate a class-society. If people cannot distinguish physical from man-made necessity, if they do not consciously search out the hidden laws of matter, they remain helpless in the face of nature. Therefore, later brahminism greatly restricted both human freedom—the recognition of necessity—and the production of value, which is measured by SOCIALLY NECESSARY, labour-time. Science as the cognition of necessity was incompatible with brahmin insistence upon dogma and authority. The incompatibility grew with the practice of forging or re-writing sacred works to order. The roots of all this superstition lie in the primitive means of production, just one little step above food-gathering. To this day, the Indian peasant meticulously performs ritual acts before the commencement of any important process : ploughing, sowing, harvest, threshing, &c.

It follows that brahminism must have had some peculiar function in the early means of production, some outstanding

success which gave it a grip upon society. Mere superstition cannot arise, unless it has some deep productive roots, though it may survive by inertia. One of these functions was a good calendar. It does not suffice here, as in Europe, for the agriculturist to note the end of winter by natural signs. The word for 'rain' *varṣa* also means 'year', so important is the annual monsoon for India. The Indian farmer has to prepare his land before the monsoon sets in. The sowing can only be done after the proper rainy season has begun, or the sprouts will die. The fields are best weeded during the mid-monsoon break. If the harvest be brought in before the last seasonal rain, there is every chance that grain will rot on the threshing floor. Empirical observation says that the four-month rains set in, break, and cease at approximately fixed times of the year. The real difficulty lay in telling the time of the year accurately. The Egyptians forecast their corresponding basic agricultural event, the annual flood of the Nile, by its correlation with the heliacal rising of Sirius. The Chinese solved their farmers' problem by the 24 solar divisions of the year which had little to do with the twelve lunar months into which one more was intercalated during seven out of every nineteen years. Something similar was needed for India, where the problem was complicated, with poorer instruments of observation and the absence of materials upon which long records could be preserved.

The moon with its phases sufficed for primitive man's simple ritual, while the birds, beasts, and plants themselves furnished all necessary information to food-gatherers. This left the indispensable heritage of the lunar month, and prognostication by omens. The food-producer's year is solar, which requires constant adjustment of the lunar months. The urgent need for a working almanac lay at the root of astronomy, algebra, the theory of numbers, all of which were conspicuous Indian (specifically brahmin) achievements. The season could then be foretold even when the sun and the moon obliterated their starry background, or were invisible because of clouds. Primitive reasoning led inevitably to the conclusion that the heavenly bodies not merely predict but form the all-important weather ; the word 'meteorology' still implies this. Therefore,

the stars and planets foreshadow and control all of human life. Thus the horoscopes (which even Galileo drew up in his day), astrology, *mantras* and ritual to placate or influence the planets were natural concomitants of the indispensable brahmin *pañcāṅga*. To this day, Indians speak, with fair accuracy, of the rains of such and such a constellation being due. On the other hand, the largest Indian crowds bathe at sacred places during the *kumbha-melās*, or to free the sun from an eclipse which is accurately predicted by the Nautical Almanac, not by brahmin theories. There are at least three different major calendar systems in use among the people in various parts of the country, in spite of a common theoretical basis. The differences may ultimately be traced to the different local behaviour of the monsoon rains. In the same way, the science of geometry ('earth-measuring') received its great start in Egypt, where triangulation was necessary to apportion fields and plots in the area of uniform fertility, after the silt deposit of nilotic floods had obliterated the boundary marks. It may be noted that Euclid brought the science to its highest pitch under the Ptolemies, whose main preoccupation was to expropriate the maximum surplus from the enslaved peasant.

It cannot be without significance that Āryabhaṭṭa (whose suggestion that the earth rotated about its axis was nullified by his commentators), belongs to the Gupta period (A.D. 488 ?). Varāhamihira, far better known for his astrology, iconography, prognostication, and allied "science" was certainly an ornament of the Gupta court. The last great name in Hindu astronomy is that of a southerner, Bhāskarācārya, of the late 12th century in Hyderabad, which shows the lag between north and south in the development of full agrarian economy. Only in medicine did India show better discoveries, lost because of the progressive refusal to indulge in surgery, dissection, anatomy (all unclean practices), the diversion of chemical research into alchemy, and the secretive nature of all brahmin disciplines.

8.3. Brahmin penetration of the south is responsible for the purāṇic Agastya legends, wherein that sage commanded the high, impassable Vindhya mountain to lie flat, overcame "demons" whose cults may some day be traced locally, and drank up the ocean. Whether this indicates early colonization

by members of the Agastya *gotra* is not clear. The doubtful analysis of such material is less fruitful than the examination of the *Manusmṛti*,[5] still a very authoritative brahmin document. It belongs, in its present form, substantially to the period under discussion. The book is meant primarily for brahmins. A great part is taken up with ritual and spiritual matters that most concern the priesthood. Compilation from diverse sources and accepted traditions has left its mark in contradictory statements, which combine with obscure rules to give Hindu law its flexible practice and completely illogical theory. The most interesting portion is that on administration, particularly for its contrast with the *Arthaśāstra* (which has silently influenced it nevertheless). Force lies at the very foundations of the state and social order :

> "For the king's sake, the Lord formerly created his own son, Punishment (*daṇḍa*), the protector of all creatures, the (incarnate) law, formed of Brahmā's glory. (*Ms.* 7.14)...Punishment alone governs all created beings, punishment watches over them while they sleep; the wise declare punishment to be law (*dharma*) (*Ms.* 7.18) ...The whole world is kept in order by punishment. For a guiltless man is hard to find (*Ms.* 7.22). (The king) should carefully compel the vaiśyas and the sūdras to perform the work (prescribed) for them; for if these two castes swerved from their duties, they would throw the whole world into confusion". (*Ms.* 8.418).

The function of the state was to coerce the producers to support the ruling classes, for the śūdra does all the manual work, the vaiśya cattle-keeping and trade in the *Ms.* scheme. This panegyric on force in a book called a *dharma-śāstra* proves that brahminism had come a long way from the Asokan concept of *dharma* as social ethics. Reality being what it is, the section on *āpaddharma* allows even the higher castes to indulge in trade, money-lending, and the like when in difficulties, under pressure of necessity; according to *Ms.* 8.348, even brahmins could, in distress, take to arms.

The four-caste system here represents the class structure. Brahmins have numerous special privileges, including exemption from taxes, which even a king dying from want must not levy upon them (*Ms.* 7.133). The kṣatriyas collect taxes, not pay them. The other two bear the burden, the śūdra having the right only to a bare maintenance. Whether bought or un-

bought, a śūdra may be compelled to work, especially by a brahmin; servitude is his nature and creation, so that he cannot be freed from it even when released by a particular master. (*Ms.* 8.413-4 ; 10 ; 121). A śūdra's accumulation of property gives pain to the brahmin (*Ms.* 10. 129). This naturally raised difficulties with living people who did not belong to any of the three, twice-born, upper castes, but also could not be coerced. These odd people were explained away as the result of inter-caste breeding between the original four, which the king should prevent; nevertheless, hypergamy clearly existed and had to be tolerated, whereas the reverse mixture, a man of lower caste cohabiting with a woman of a higher, was looked upon with due horror. With characteristic inconsistency, seven generations of intermarriage permitted even śūdras turning into brahmins, or the converse so that caste was much less rigid in practice than in theory. (*Ms.* 10.64-5) Each of the mixed secondary castes was assigned some productive task in general. This allowed all sorts of tribes and guilds to be admitted to society, as proved by the names for these mixed castes : Māgadha, Vaidehaka, Licchavi, Ambaṣṭha, Ugra, most of which can be traced elsewhere through the progression : tribe, guild, caste (*jāti*, as against the older *varṇa* 'colour', for each of the four primary class-castes). This mixed-caste theory seen in the *Arthaśāstra* (3.7) in a simpler form, presumably evolved because mixed offspring were then fairly common. Inheritance of property, held by the undivided household, would cause difficulties in a caste society; hence the assignment of a profession to the son who could inherit the caste of neither parent. Extra-caste organizations were not looked upon with any favour by the priests, though they never failed to derive all possible advantage from such associations. Any member of a *saṃgha*, inhabiting a village or district, who defaults on a sworn contract is to be exiled from the realm (*Ms.* 8.219). Brahmin priests who perform any ritual for a *gaṇa* (tribal community) should not be invited to a feast for the Manes (Ms. 3.164).

Emphasis upon religion did not blind the authors of the *smṛtis* to considerations of interest and usury. What has been quoted earlier from the *Arth.* may be contrasted to *Ms.* 8 :

"A money-lender may stipulate for an interest, permitted by Vasiṣṭha, of 1/80 of a hundred per month (15%) (8.140)...Just two in the hundred, three, four, and five (but no more) may he take as monthly interest according to the order of the castes (*i.e.* the brahmin may be charged at 24%, Kṣatriya 36%, vaiśya 48% śūdra 60%; 8.142)...Stipulated interest beyond the legal rate cannot be recovered; they call that usury; the lender is in no case entitled to more than 5 in the hundred (per month; 8.152). Let him not take interest beyond one year, nor such as is unapproved, nor compound interest, periodical interest, nor interest to be paid for by the bodily labour (of a pledged animal or slave; 8.153). He who, unable to make payment (at the agreed time) wishes to make a new contract, may renew the agreement after paying the interest which is due (8.154). If he cannot pay the money (due as interest), he may insert it in the new agreement; he must promise to pay as much interest as may (previously) be due (8.155)...Even by personal labour shall the debtor make good (what he owes) to his creditor, if he be of the same caste or of a lower one (than the creditor); but a debtor of higher caste shall pay it off gradually (when he earns something)".

The basically earlier but rewritten Nārada (*TSS.* 97) enters into far greater detail as to debts, contracts, mortgages, deposits. The graduated economic position of the castes is new; the *Arth.* treated a debt as independent of the debtor's and creditor's caste. Debt-slavery, which was later to reduce many tribal castes to permanent serfdom, seems in the *Arth.* to have been primarily for non-payment of debts to the state, *i.e.* of taxes, hence penal slavery. Here, we see traditional interest rates in conflict with new greed and usury, which are admitted by the back door. With the fullest allowance for brahmin theorizing, it remains clear that caste had become a fresh excuse for new, differential exploitation. Not the risk of the venture (as in the *Arth.*) but the birth-status of the debtor could determine the rate of interest. This meant in particular a specially heavy load upon the poorest cultivator, every time the harvest failed to yield enough for the whole year. When compound interest crept into the picture, this led to the creation of a perpetually indebted working class, which substituted for the classical slave and feudal serf of Europe.

The *Manusmṛti* king is a minuscule ruler. He is not asked to strike his own coins nor to undertake large public works; at most he need punish those who damaged ancient dams or

reservoirs. According to *Ms.* 8.402, he should personally regulate market prices in public, every five days. According to 8.314-6, the penitent thief had to approach the king with a hardwood club, stave, or spear and request chastisement; if the king did not strike him with proper force, the unexpiated portion of the sin would be transferred to the *rājā*. Some commentators reserve this for a most sinful theft, that of the brahmin's gold (cf. 9.235; 11.55). Such a king, though constantly at war against neighbours, could not have ruled more than a county. In fact, the economy makes a sad comparison with that of the *Arth.* The *paṇa* was of copper (*Ms.* 8.136), the silver coin of 32 *guñjā* weight being called 'ancient' (*purāṇa*). Payment is far lower than by the Mauryan scale: "One (copper) *paṇa* must be given (daily, says the commentator) as wages to the lowest, six to the highest, likewise clothing every six months and one *droṇa* of grain every month" (*Ms.* 7.126). This is for menials of the king; officials are to live off the land. The village is the main unit regulated in some detail; towns receive no attention. The headman of a village, appointed by the king, has perquisites of food, drink, fuel; the head over ten villages, a family-size holding of land; five family holdings should be allotted to the ruler of twenty villages, (the revenues) of an entire village to the administrator over a hundred, and (the revenues) of a town to the lord of a thousand villages. This is a proto-feudal system. Revenues are very low, apart from the two higher castes escaping altogether, at least in theory. A fiftieth of (the increase in) cattle and gold, an eighth, sixth, or twelfth part of the crops are normal (7.130). In times of the treasury's distress, he may take as much as a fourth (10.118) without sin though the commentators would prefer to have that only from śūdras. The vaiśyas might be subjected to a capital levy of 1/8 on grain, 1/20 on profits or a minimum of one *kārṣāpaṇa*. This is far lighter than the murderous collections recommended by Cāṇakya. For the free worker, śūdra or not, and the artisan, who cannot pay even a trifle (7.137), one day's unpaid labour in the month for the king takes the place of taxes (7.138), the beginning of the feudal corvée.

Two injunctions specially underline the difference between

this type of rule and the great empire that had passed away. "Having well considered (prices of) purchase and sale, (the length of) the road, (the expenses for) food and condiments (during the journey), charges for protection (insurance, or paid guards) of the goods, let the king assess the tax on traders" (*Ms.* 7.127). This consideration to the trader was essential, for the state no longer engaged in the mass sale of produce. The *sītā* crown lands do not appear nor do the *paura-jānapadas* so prominent in the *Arth.* Royal monopolies are casually mentioned in *Ms.* 8.399, without details. Metals and salt are not such monopolies; the petty kingdom would in general have to import both. The other new feature is that the concept of law as a general restriction upon all members of society disappears. The laws of Manu confess their own inadequacy (8.41,46) : "(A king) who knows the sacred law must inquire into the laws of the castes (*jāti*), of the districts (*janapada*), guilds (*śreṇī*), and of the families (*kula*)". The judgement must conform to all of these. *Arth.* 3.10 had regulated even the joint villages whose members were legally compelled to make their contribution to communal works, feasts, entertainments, and joint action. The *Ms.* ignores this, or takes it for granted. The state, therefore, only regulated transactions between the groups that participated in social production, whereas each group had to be judged by its own law. The *Arthaśāstra* permitted such latitude in group-law only for inheritance. Society was thinly bound together even when the four-caste system had been readjusted by the addition of 'mixed' castes. There is no mention whatever of āṭavika food-gatherers, who were beyond the pale.

The document and the system, so well suited to a small king over many villages, would seem to have arisen, on internal evidence (*Ms.* 2.17-24), out of the fragments of the Mauryan empire, in its Gangetic heartland. Land continued to be cleared, but henceforth by private enterprise, which bore the responsibility for further spread of villages. Nāgasena says to king Menander (*MP.* 4.5.15) : "And it is as when a man clears away the jungle, and sets free (*nīharati*) a piece of land, and the people use the phrase : 'That is his land'. But the land was not made by him. It is because he has brought

the land into use that he is called the owner of the land". *Arth.* 2.1 would not have granted him ownership, only the right not to be driven off the patch he had cleared, even if he did not plant it immediately; if he failed to produce a crop and revenue for the state, he would ultimately lose title. The *Manusmṛti* (9.44) agrees with the *Milindapañha* : The land belongs to him who first clears it, as does the buck to him who gets in the first arrow. However, the individual who cleared a patch of land would in general be member of some community, based upon kinship and upon a village, so that this clearing would be in marginal land. A solitary cultivator in completely virgin wilderness is difficult to imagine at this period, in view of the known extent of the settlement, and the need for protection against savages, or of coming to terms with them. In the *Ms.* rules of inheritance (9.219) say that pasture-land is indivisible, which implies that other land could be divided if the heirs did not wish to continue as a joint household. At the same time, the sale of water-reservoirs and orchards was as great an offence as selling one's own wife and children (*Ms.* 11.61-2). Instead of the strong guards at the frontiers of every *janapada*, we now have local police garrisons (*gulma* discussed in chap. IX) for every two, three, five, and hundred villages (*Ms.* 7.114). These were supposed to protect the villages, which thus needed more defence against robbers than before. One suspects that without the *gulma*, taxes would not have been easy to collect, light as they were, from the indifferent countryside.

8.4. The *smṛti* foreshadows complete victory of the village, with consequences far deadlier than any invasion. The hidebound caste system became rigid only within stagnant villages whose chief intellectual product, the brahmin, was stamped with incurable rusticity elevated to religious dogma. For an orthodox brahmin, travel beyond the traditional limits of *ārya-deśa* entailed penance ; residence was forbidden. Let him not enter into a town, let him not allow the dust of the town to settle upon him, is another characteristic recommendation of the Baudhāyana *dharma sūtra* (2.3.33), also disobeyed regularly. This mentality killed history. It mattered little which king ruled over the relatively changeless village.

The superb coinage of Indo-Greek rulers meant as little as any other piece of silver to the countryside which lived by petty internal production, paid taxes in kind to anyone strong enough to extort them, so had very little use for currency. The passage of years had little meaning compared with the vital round of the seasons, because the villagers produced almost all they needed every year, to consume it (but for that portion expropriated for taxes) by the time of the next harvest. As a result, brahmin scholars joined (and still engage in) bitter theological controversy about the *tithi* lunar date of a festival event like Rāma's legendary conquest of Laṅkā, without troubling themselves as to the year. It is only in Jain manuscripts that the date by year and era is normally given, because the merchants were used to keeping annual records over a long period. Any unusual character produced by the village migrated to a court, or was canonized by his fellow villagers; in either case, his saga and memory were swallowed up in folklore or legend. Awareness of strangers means steady contact by travel, warfare or trade. Of these, the first was negligible, in the guise of pilgrimage. The second was impossible to the disarmed villages, the third reduced to a low minimum monopolized by exclusive, despised, professional groups. To the village priest, myth gradually became more real than whatever happened to his neighbours of low caste with whom cultural or social intercourse was low. Differences between villages were eroded by the static mode of production, so that a village founded in 1500 A.D. looked about the same after a century or two as one first settled over a thousand years earlier. The Indian village appeared "timeless" to foreign observers simply because memory and record of time served no useful purpose in the life of the village.

The village-kingdom of the *Manusmṛti* had little use for the Buddhism suited to combine warring Aryanized tribes into a new society, or for the earlier vedic religion. But elements from both were retained, the brahmin preached non-violence at the same time as war, and supposedly devoted himself to vedic study. The traditional five great vedic animal-sacrifices had now degenerated into symbolic offerings (*Ms.* 3.67-71). The hard-drinking fighter, Indra (Dionysos of Megasthenes),

and the vedic gods — except Viṣṇu reshaped — could not be modified to suit newer needs, though the attempt had been made.[9] New gods developed, better suited to the rustic mentality, more paying to the brahmin. The most successful was Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa-Kṛṣṇa, who dominates the final redaction of the *Mbh.* which is closely related to the *Ms.* It was easy to absorb all prominent ancient or local cults as incarnations or numina of the god. This syncretism gave a unity to the brahmins, a cultural unity to the land. It was most important for the absorption of foreigners into a caste society. At Besnagar, near the ancient Vidiśā, a stone column still bears the Prakrit inscription :

"This eagle-topped (*garuḍadhvaja*) pillar of Vāsudeva, god of gods, has been erected here by Heliodoros, a votary of Bhagavat, a son of Diya (Dio), man of Taxila, ambassador of the Greeks (Yona), who has come from the great king Antialkidas to king Kāsīputa Bhāgabhadra, the saviour, who prospers in the 14th current year of his reign".

The epithet 'saviour' (*tratara*, Greek *sotêr*) is characteristically Greek, as is the peculiar word-order[10] of the inscription. Bhāgabhadra is identified with a Śuṅga ruler. Antialkidas ruled circa 90 B.C. at Taxila. The Greek does not worship Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva as Herakles, though the Greeks from Alexander to Megasthenes had identified the two. The title *bhagavat* ('the Blessed One') was transferred from Buddhism by the followers of Viṣṇu, as was the name Puruṣottama ('best of men'). The followers of Viṣṇu clearly abandoned former brahmin exclusiveness towards strangers.

The other prominent god is Śiva, who has features reminiscent of the three-faced Indus figure surrounded by totem animals. With his *gaṇa* companions who were cacodaemon goblins, and a family headed by his 'wife', the mother-goddess Pārvatī ('daughter of the mountain'), Śiva too could build up a syncretism. The ancestry of these gods is no longer relevant. The essential is that they were new personal gods whom everyone could worship. Śiva demanded orgiastic rites known in many primitive cults, but certainly not vedic, nor brahminic. Kṛṣṇa, as preacher of the *Bhagavad-gītā* (which would have been completed by the end of our period) summarized all previous

doctrines, twisted them all together to one common end : faith in him as the supreme god. As he was an athlete, a husband of many goddesses, and a shepherd boy at the same time, people of many originally different cults could, and did, worship him. Later, after Buddhism had died away, the two newer worships came into violent conflict which matured in the twelfth century and was fought out without the least attention to the Muslims who opposed all Hinduism. The reason was that Śiva had by then become the god of the great barons, whereas the cowherd-boy Kṛṣṇa remained associated with small producers. The echoes of this *smārta-vaiṣṇava* controversy did not fade away till the 19th century. We note here that Buddha and Śiva (but not Viṣṇu) appear on Kuṣāṇa coins. At the same time, Buddhism continued in strength, both in the north and the south ; the former by inertia, the latter because its civilizing mission had yet to be fulfilled. We have a letter[11] of the famous Buddhist teacher Mātṛceṭa to an unnamed (but presumably Kuṣāṇa) ruler, which enjoins him not to kill animals ; nothing is said about killing men in war. During the reign of Kaṇiṣka, a fourth Buddhist council was held, according to a heavily disputed tradition. There is no dispute as to the result of the supposed council : a split between two schools of Buddhist thought. The northerners claimed the Great Vehicle (Mahāyāna), corresponding precisely to the activities and tastes which might have been expected by nobles and satraps that continued to pile gifts upon ancient monastic foundations. This Mahāyāna school changed its language to Sanskrit, though not always the carefully developed Pāṇinian type ; Buddhist hybrid Sanskrit forms an idiom by itself. They drifted further away from the common people in their refinement of doctrine, researches into science and higher abstract philosophy. The conservative Hīnayāna (Lesser Vehicle ; contemptuously so labelled by the versatile northerners) retained a primitive, austere Buddhism, with its simpler Pāli language — which was nearly as distant as Sanskrit from the common peoples' idioms in the south where these monks continued to preach the Law. The division was not sharp for several Hīnayāna monasteries persisted in the north, while the Mahāyāna had, by the second century A.D., come as far

south as the lower Kṛṣṇā river in the person of the great Nāgārjuna, scientist and theologian, who is supposed to have died at Nāgārjunikoṇḍa. Other sects were not banned. The Jains, always prominent in the south, gained ground in the north. The beautiful red sandstone Kuṣāṇa sculptures of Mathurā preserve many pieces from Jain foundations. This would be expected, for the statues show court nobles dressed in fine embroidered clothes, which implies trade, and therefore implies the traders whom the Jain religion suited perhaps better than pampered Buddhism. Better archaeology at Mathurā would tell us more about the less perishable wares that must have been exchanged at this important trade center.

8.5. The elucidation of various theologies as arising out of the productive basis, when nothing is known of the precise social actions recommended by the particular sects at the time (whatever that was) their texts were composed, merely leads to the construction of a super-theology in the name of materialism. It is far more instructive to study the material expression of a religious faith. There are no temples of the period. Northern stūpas, mainly of Kuṣāṇa times, have also vanished. In the south, however, remain the most impressive of contemporary monuments, of which the caves at Kārle, just under forty miles north-west of Poona, may be studied as an outstanding example. The human effort spent upon such caves makes them as useful material for the historian as any document could be. All the more so, because contemporary records are missing, except for a few inscriptions of which the most important occur precisely in such grottos.

A Buddhist cave is a retreat (*layanam*), so these are characteristically hidden in the side of a bastion-like projection half-way up a sheer hill; still difficult of access though a path has been prepared by the government which also cleared and preserves the caves. There is no city of any size near-by. The town of Loṇavaḷā grew out of the Western Railway workshops and staff quarters; its termination, originally —*āvḷī*, is derived from *pallī*, which means savage food-gatherer tribesmen's hamlet. The word is unknown to the *Arthaśāstra*; *pallīpati* is a savage chief in *Har*. 232. This meaning of *pallī* survived till the 10th century at least in the

Kathāsaritsāgara, where the noun designates without exception the hut-clusters (*KSS*. 10. 136, 156, 188... ; 13.42 etc.) of Bhīl savages addicted to brigandage and human sacrifice. The whole neighbourhood of Bombay city is still marked with this survival of aboriginal settlement : Borīvlī (four miles from the Kaṇherī Buddhist caves), Kāndivlī (where stone-age tools have been found in cuttings), Ḍombivlī whose name indicates a settlement of the low Ḍomb caste known to be of tribal origin. The site of Kārle caves could not have been associated with a settlement on the difficult hillside. A few stone flakes and microliths of Mahārāṣṭra late-stone-age type are found in the watercourse, but come from the top of the hill, not the grottos whose excavation would in any case have covered previous deposits, had there been room for such a settlement.

From the top of the cave-hill, the most notable features of the landscape are forts : Mānrañjan and Rājmāchī to the north-west along the old Marāṭha road which came down into the coastal plain near Bhivpurī ; Lohogaḍ and Visāpūr dominate the shortest route to the coast which passed between them towards the south of west, presumably to the port at Chaul (Revadaṇḍā). Further down are other forts : Prabaḷ behind Bombay city's holiday resort on Mātherān hill, Karṇāḷā dominating Revās creek port, Korigarh, Sudhāgarh, Raigarh. All of these are medieval, none older than about the 8th century. The trade routes, on the other hand, had been frequented since well before the second century B.C. The Kārle caves begun about 150 B.C. (the bulk completed by 150 A.D. but with later sculptures on façades), Bhāje (which has early frescos), Beḍsā, Koṇḍāṇe, Junnar (Nāṇeghāt) and such other caves of the same period mark the junctions of former trade routes very well. The oldest temple in the region, the attractive but dilapidated fane of Śiva at Ambarnath (*amara-nātha*, the immortal Lord) thirty miles nearer Bombay was built only in 1060 A.D. [It was desecrated by Mohammedans not later than the 14th century, and continues to be desecrated today by idle picknickers and displaced but still hopeful Sindhis (who coat everything within reach with *sindūra*). These are the only people to visit it except for holy beggars, and the crowd at a large annual (March) fair at Śivarātri festival. Ambarnāth village carries

on in the old way just beyond the temple, with a partly roofed, unwalled shrine of a mother goddess simply called *āī* (= mother) ; the original village goddess (*gāvadevī*) has been taken over by itinerant *sādhus* who worship her two conflicting modern images as Lakṣmī and Durgā.] Beyond Ambarnāth, the end of the trade-route is marked by the old harbours of Kalyāṇ, and of Ṭhāṇā (*sthānaka*), and the creeks of Panveḷ and others on the coast

Kārle is situated near the junction of several trade-routes to the coast with the main trade-route (on which we have small caves at Shelārwāḍī and Poona) on the Deccan plateau. It was close to a place of exchange for the caravans ; the abrupt descent of nearly two thousand feet from the plateau into the coastal plain is practicable only down a few paths that wind along the faces of otherwise sheer cliffs. Similar positions characterize other Deccan caves. All these routes could easily be traced by air survey and ground investigation. For example, a chain of grottos (which runs down from Śirwaḷ to Mahāḍ and the little-known but well-inscribed caves at Kuḍā) joins Paṇḍharpur to creek-ports on the west coast, cutting across the river-valleys and their extensions on the Deccan plain which mark the course of pastoral or agrarian settlement. At these junctions, two caravans exchanged goods from their respective territories. The remnants of the system persist further south in a few Banjārīs (*vāṇijyakāra*), and such pack-traders who are barely out of the tribal-guild stage. The chain of fortresses came long after the routes had been established. Their purpose was to collect tolls from the trader, while the lord of the fort also took away the surplus grain from the dwellers near him, thus himself becoming the agent of trade. These strong places bring us well into the feudal period, by which time the caves sheltered only bats and an occasional robber.

The aboriginal population remains as the Kāthkarī tribesmen of the hills, who still have little faith in regular food-production, and are among the very few Indians to shoot and eat monkeys. A few try occasional slash-and-burn cultivation of *kodru* (*Paspalum scrobiculatum*) others help thresh rice for the chaff and broken grain. They live as far as possible off

forest produce such as honey, mice, and whatever else they can gather ; their dead may be immediately buried but exhumed after a while to be cremated — a somewhat mixed practice. However, many of them have become expert charcoal burners. Lamāṇ (*lambamāna*) bullock-pack caravans still transport the charcoal up the old pack-tracks (*aṃsapatha*) in the *ghāṭs*. Tribesmen have left a visible mark on the physiognomy of the adjacent castes of cultivators with whom no kinship is acknowledged today on either side. Similarly, Nāsik is at the river-crossing of a very important group of stone-age trade-routes that came together on the Godāvarī, which is not navigable for a hundred miles in either direction but contained the usual late-stone-age river-valley settlements. The caves were long ascribed to the Pāṇḍavas in their exile, while the river-crossing is built over with medieval temples particularly sacred to the memory of another exiled hero, Rāma. The aboriginal (Ḍāng and Bhīl) population is still more prominent in the surrounding region than at Kārle. The position of Sāñcī has been discussed earlier, though there are no caves, only outdoor stūpas. Ajaṇṭā, Ellorā, Aurangābād, and the fort of Daulatābād form a similar though later complex, a silent display of continuous regional history for those who can read it. A neolithic village has been excavated on top of the Ellorā cave-hill, while the technique of the caves develops steadily as one passes along the sequence. The repairs to the Ellorā Kailās cave-tower and construction of the beautiful stone temple in front were due (traditionally) to the widowed Ahilyā Bāī Hoḷkar of Indore, who died in 1795.

The most obtrusive feature of the main (*caitya*) cave at Kārle is the later temple of the goddess Ekavīrā at the entrance. A crude relief image of the same goddess, worshipped by villagers as *Yamāī* (hence a death-goddess) is carved in the elegant *vihāra* at Beḍsā, the one cave where the sublime exaltation of a sylvan retreat may still be experienced by those who love solitude. The villagers still have a legend that the " four brothers " who started the Beḍsā caves were scared away by the goddess to Bhājā, and thence to Kārle, where they excavated the other retreats. The long hall at Kārle echoes resoundingly to the incessant din made on the temple bells by the

imbecile piety of visitors who insist upon thus announcing their arrival, to the deity. The shrine to this little-known goddess was built and the worship is still financed by men of the *koḷī* (fishermen and sailors) caste from Bombay island at the other end of the ancient trade-route, a fact that has not struck anyone as noteworthy in spite of the crowded five-day annual fair still held by the Koḷīs every Caitra (April), attended by peasants of all castes. Just opposite the temple, at the entrance, is a stone pillar in the Asokan lion-capital style, donated by Agimitaṇaka, son of Gotī, and a Mahāraṭhi. His title has been taken by resurgent local patriotism to indicate the early glory of the Marāṭhās but one little dot, sometimes visible — whether by mistake of the sculptor or not — makes the word *mahārathi* = of the great chariot, so a high military officer. Like the rest of the caves, this pillar is carved out by removing all the trap-rock around it ; it would have been far easier to build it of stone blocks. The formidable undertaking, chipped by patient hand-labour out of the most refractory stone (which even now turns the points of pneumatic drills) must have taken several generations. It was not the work of any one man; numerous donors have left their names on various portions ; yet the plan is unified. This cooperation over a long period of many people from distant places to a single preconceived design characterizes all the caves and stūpas, hence the society, of the period. Of the gifts, some collective, no less than fourteen are engraved with the place-name Dhenukākaṭa, once wrongly identified with Dhānyaghaṭaka near Amarāvatī, clear across the peninsula, but now admitted to have been much nearer. Some of these donors were Greeks. The fifth pillar from the left inside the main cave reads 'of Dhaṃma-yavana from Dhenukākaṭa, (the pillar is the gift)' (Fig. 35). Others (e.g. on the third pillar) similarly proclaim themselves Yavanas, not only at Kārle but Junnar (Lüders 1154, 1156). It is important to note that they were peaceful merchants, not conquerors, settled on the tip of Bombay (Salcête) island, in a village that exists (probably Ḍoṃgrī) but whose appearance

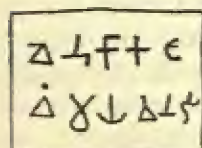


Fig. 35
Dhenukākaṭā Dhaṃmayavanasa

has now nothing to distinguish it from other surrounding 'timeless' villages. Saka (Lüders 1162) and Ābhīra donors appear at Junnar, Nāsik, though such people had their kingdoms far away. It was not for lack of knowledge or profit that the south remained unconquered; the invaders would have found the conquest far more difficult than the softer village-bound north.

The caves were given royal support also. Uṣavadāta, a Śaka son-in-law of the 'king, *khaharāta*, satrap Nahapāna' boasts of his many gifts to brahmins in an inscription to the right of the central door, and then bestows a village Karajika upon the monks at Valuraka (*EI*. 7. p. 57,61; Lüders 1099-1100). The latter name, read with difficulty in the damaged inscription, is probably Vehuraka; Vehergāo is the modern village near the foot of the climb to the caves. By 'gift' is meant transfer of royal prerogatives, i.e. the taxes that would normally have gone to the state, without the right of increasing these taxes, or drawing any other profit from the village, but also without passing any portion of the tribute-rent so collected on to the state. It was by no means a feudal holding, as the ruler claimed no service in return. Other such gifts are recorded in the name of Uṣavadāta at the Nāsik caves. In both cases, the Śātakarṇi conquerors gladly continued or improved the donations, as they remind us in their contiguous inscriptions. For Kārle, the village was again given by Vāsiṭhiputa Somadeva, a *mahāraṭhi*, son of Kosikīputa Mitadeva, in the seventh year of king Vāsiṭhiputa Puḷumāyi. Normally, only the king himself could have made the gift. Above the door-frieze, king Gotamīputra confirmed the gift of Karajaka, ordering his governor to look after the monks. The district is recorded in the inscription as *Māmālā-hāra*, identified with the present Māvaḷ which extends just to the west of the caves. It has passed without notice that the worship of *Māvalā-devī* is still prevalent in the region (Kāmsheṭ river bank, step-well and pond at Taḷegāo, &c.). The name collectively indicates a group of anonymous mother-goddesses that are simultaneously water-deities — equivalent to the original vedic Apsaras. The monks seem to have done very well, for their cells have sockets for doors that would be more than light screens. This implies in-

dividual property well beyond the mendicant's trifling possessions allowed by Vinaya rules. How did the nun Asāḍhamitā get money to donate at least the stone belt at the base of the great arch that soars over the Kārle entrance? The sculptures on the façade and those surmounting the pillars are remarkable as decorations for a monastic assembly hall for ascetics. Couple after handsome couple appears, often riding elephants. Some perhaps represent the donor's parents or donor and wife, symbolically as *yakṣas*. Both men and women have hair most intricately dressed. The women are luxuriously clad in fine diaphanous cloth which reveals their charms while leaving their high breasts uncovered.

The splendid, planned, cooperative achievement, the artistic success, must not blind us to the failure of the religion — a failure of the society too.

8.6. The types of donors are still more remarkable. The Greek Dhammayavana's pillar was shared by a lay-disciple from Sopārā, near Ṭhāṇā on the coast, now a village like the rest but once sufficiently important for the carving of Asokan edicts, and known to Ptolemy and the *Periplus* as a famous port. This patron (who gave the capital of the pillar) was some sort of a wealthy person, like the banker (*seṭhin*) Bhutapāla from Vejayanti by whom was 'finished (*pariniṭhāpitam*) this house of stone, the finest in India'. The boast is justified, considering the time, by the beautiful five-storied reliefs left at both sides of the entrance by Bhutapāla's charity. Vejayanti has been identified with the distant Banavāsī in North Kanara, a creek-port. Of quite another class is the perfume-vendor (*gamdhika*) Siṃhadata from Dhenukākaṭa who donated the right-hand arched doorway. From Dhenukākaṭa also came the carpenter (*vaḍhaki*) Sāmiṇa who signed the pillar in front of the central doorway. This cannot have been because of some vanished woodwork, though woodwork there was (at Bhājā, the whole façade was wooden). The inside of the Caitya still preserves wooden ceiling arches that help the cave imitate a *maṇṭapa* construction, and of which the original portions (for they have been recently patched with modern woodwork to keep them *in situ*) should facilitate Carbon-14 dating. Studying other caves, as at Nāsik, Kuḍā,

Kaṇheri we find gifts (of parts of the caves) signed by numerous merchants, physicians, officials. A class of donors who have left parallel signatures would appear far too humble to accumulate any wealth at all in the later village economy where they would normally have nothing more than a trifling share of the grain and a patch or two of land to till in their spare time : blacksmiths, flower vendors (*mālākāra*), braziers (*kāsākāra*), ploughmen (*hālakiya*), householders (*gahapatī*, *kuṭumbika*).

The contrast with patrons in Kuṣāṇa territory is striking. There we find a greater proportion of kings or nobles whose statues occur so frequently at Mathurā, signing the gifts. Money-makers, (including a prostitute, her daughter, and associates but) generally merchants, also patronized the Jain foundations at Mathurā. There is a greater variety at Sāñcī, but even then the workers are painfully few. Among the 407 Sāñcī inscriptions listed by Lüders (*EI*. 10, app. nos. 162-568), less than half a dozen seem indubitably of craftsmen, of which one (no. 346) is guild leader or foreman of 'artisans of king siri-Satakaṇi'. Nevertheless, we can say that, from Sāñcī down south, there was not the closed village economy, nor the anonymity that went with it. It must be remembered that though a great deal of the work at all these places came from donations too small to be recorded, they were cash donations nevertheless. There was considerable commodity production and exchange that enabled many sorts of artisans to accumulate money — artisans who would have nothing to donate in the ordinary self-contained village. It is worth considering whether the custom preserved by the coastal open-sea-fishermen Koḷīs, (of coming all the way to Kārle, just after their new year, from Bombay island or a greater distance) does not go back to their association with the trade and transport from Dhenukākaṭa and Sopārā. The survival to this day of such association is not improbable. The Bhojakas of Asoka's thirteenth rock-edict are southerners, like the Pitinikas (of Paiṭhaṇ) with whom they are bracketed. The *mahāraṭhinī* Sāmaḍinikā, daughter of a *mahābhoja*, donated a cistern at Beḍsā. In the Mahād-Kuḍā region, they seem to be tribal chieftains. In the same locality, we find Rājbhoj as a surname among the scheduled castes,

formerly untouchables.

Some of these craftsmen were organised in powerful guilds. An epigraph of Uṣavadāta quoted *in extenso* speaks for itself in cave 10 at Nāsik (*EI*. 8.82-4) :

"*Sidham*. In the year 42, in the month Vesākha, Usavadāta, son of Dīnika, son-in-law of king Nahapāna the Kṣaharāta satrap, has bestowed this cave upon the *Saṃgha* (of monks from) all directions. He has also given a perpetual endowment of three thousand - 3000 - *kahāpaṇas* which for the members of the Order, of any sect and origin, dwelling in this cave, will serve as money for their robes (*civarika*) and for outside travel (*kusaṇa*, viaticum). And those *kahāpaṇas* have been invested in guilds dwelling at Govadhana (as follows) : 2000 at a (monthly) rate of one *padika* per hundred (12% annually) with a guild of weavers (*kolikanikāye*); and 1000 in another guild of weavers at the interest of 3/4 *padika* (monthly = 9%) per hundred. And those *kahāpaṇas* are not to be repaid, their interest only to be enjoyed (thus). Out of them, the 2000 at one *padika* per cent are the cloth money; out of them, to every one of the twenty monks who pass the rains in my cave, a cloth-money of twelve (*kahāpaṇas*). As to the thousand which has been invested at 3/4 *padika* per cent, out of them the viaticum money. And at the village of Chikhala-padra in the Kapura district have been given 8000 rooted coconut trees; and all of this has been proclaimed and registered at the assembly hall of the town (*nigama-sabhā*), on the record tablet (*phalaka-vara*)".

The *kahāpaṇa* of the time was of good silver, as proved by the Joghaltembhī hoard with coins of Nahapāna, many counterstruck by the conqueror Gotamīputra Sātakaṇi whose dynasty rarely bothered to mint their own silver; the weight is about 32 grains, while the total number (22,000 estimated, never counted) far surpasses any other hoard reported. There is no doubt of the prosperity of the kingdom, in so far as it may be measured by coin in circulation. Other guilds made donations or entered into similar financial agreements with princes : potters, braziers, corn-dealers, oil pressers, water-engineers, bamboo-workers, fishermen (*dāsaka*, through the head, Mugūdāsa, cave 8 at Nāsik). The word *koḷī* still describes weavers (now also *koṣṭī*) in the same province, but they have for centuries become a low caste without guild unity, scattered thinly about the countryside. That the monks handled the silver directly, instead of receiving such robes as they needed, points to a slackening of Vinaya rules. The coconut trees are still

more important, for they alone made the coastal agrarian settlement possible. The tree has manifold uses: the fronds are plaited to make partitions, used thus or directly to thatch the huts; the wood makes good rafters, the butt end of the tree the narrowest fishing boats. The coir is good for ropes. Most paying of all is the fruit, which can be eaten before ripening, but when ripe and dry yields excellent food-oil. The nut itself with its hard shell, three 'eyes' (of which one is easily pierced through by the emergent sprout), and hair left on at husking, displaced the "jar filled with water" (*udakumbha*) at all Hindu ceremonials, without benefit of scriptural sanction. The coconut has now replaced the former *bel* (*bilva*=*Aegle marmelos*) wood-apple as *dakṣiṇā* gift to brahmins. It is offered to the gods, and the meat distributed as sacrament. In the year 42 (A.D. 120 if the Śaka era is meant) the plantation was new on the coast, for the *Periplus of the Erythraean sea* (written about the end of the 1st century A.D.) has no mention of it in its careful list of trade goods at every Indian port on the west coast. On the east coast, its use is attested by pre-Arretine layers at Arikameḍu which contain coir ropes (*AI*. 2.pl. 37-B), of the 1st century B.C. The coconut was primarily a trade-crop; otherwise Uṣavadāta's gift would be senseless.


Fig. 36
Seagoing ship on a Sātavāhana coin.

So we have a densely forested region of heavy rainfall first cleared in a commodity-producing economy. The crop remained an important commodity forever after, while the trees spread to characterize the whole coast-line right up to Bengal. The tree is of Malayan origin, *nyor kali* being Sanskritized as *nārikelī*. It was the flourishing trade of this period that brought it, and perhaps *tāmbūla* (*pān*) first to India.

Uṣavadāta's prodigality is confirmed by other inscriptions in the same caves. He gave away another 32,000 coconut trees to various Caraka congregations; settled 70,000 *kahāpaṇas* on the gods and brahmins, which at 35 per *suvaṇṇa* made 2000 gold pieces. The deed was again 'registered according to custom'. He claimed to have given away 300,000 cows to brahmins, 3000 at a single investiture; ferries were endowed

for the general public at Ibā, Pārādā, Damaṇa, Tāpī, Karabenā, Dāhanukā, which places are identifiable. This was in addition to charities at pilgrimages beyond his realm, not to speak of caves, water-cisterns, and one martial exploit : "I went to release the chief of the Uttamabhadras who had been besieged for the rainy season by the Mālayas, and those Mālayas fled at the mere roar as it were, and were all made prisoners of the Uttamabhadra warriors" (*EI*. 8.78). One may reasonably expect that tribal lands near these trade centers developed suddenly to a new form, (as is now happening in Saudi Arabia) with rapid transition from tribal to private property, formation of a newly wealthy and a labouring class, fantastic riches and absolute power for the chief.

One final citation from the Nāsik epigraphs shows the deep penetration of mercantile economy : "A field has also been given by him (Uṣavadāta), bought at the hands of the brahmin Aśvibhūti, son of Vārāhī, for the price of 4000 kahāpaṇas, which (field) belonged to his father; on the boundary of the town towards the north-western side. From it food will be procured for all monks without distinction (of sect) dwelling in my cave [=cave 10 at Nāsik]". This purchase outright of land is unique, even when allowance is made for the king's making payment to a brahmin. It was not primarily intended as an act of charity to the brahmin, but to the monks. Private property in land, in the sense of buying and selling land, thus depended entirely upon the incidence of buying and selling in general. The southern economy had (in places) reached a high level of cash transactions, and was based upon commodity production, mostly by guilds in which simple individuals at all levels could participate, down to ploughmen-farmers (*hālakiya*). Yet the extraordinarily poor coinage in lead and potin of the wealthy Sātavāhana kings shows that the general run of trade was by barter with undeveloped tribal savages, who did not know the value of gold or silver. The state profited without the *Arthaśāstra* squeeze and state direction unless the coconut trees (or the state's share of the tax on them) given away by Uṣavadāta were in royal plantations, of which nothing is said. The higher elements of this society were certainly more advanced than the caste-ridden, rustic

Manusmṛti level, which must be thought of as prevalent in the earlier developed Gangetic basin. How long this advanced position could be maintained depended upon rapidity of decay, *i.e.* the rate of growth of village settlements; and upon strength of external military pressure. At the time, the Sātavāhanas were able to defend themselves, and to subjugate others. A list of their conquests sounds like a roll of trade centers, from Ujjain down, while archaelogy continues to show how they introduced civilization into food-gathering localities, leaving the hinterland relatively undeveloped beyond the few rich centers of commodity production and exchange.

"There are imported into this market-town (Barygaza=Broach), wines, Italian preferred, also Laodicean and Arabian; copper, tin, and lead; coral and topaz; thin clothing and inferior sorts of all kinds; bright coloured girdles a cubit wide; storax, sweet clover, flint glass; realgar (=arsenic monosulphide), antimony, gold and silver coin, on which there is a profit when exchanged for the money of the country; and ointment, but not very costly, and not much. And for the king there are brought into those places very costly vessels of silver, singing boys, beautiful maidens for the harem, fine wines, thin clothing of the finest weaves, and the choicest ointments... There are brought down to Barygaza from these places (Paiṭhaṇ and Tagara) by wagons and through great tracts without roads, from Paiṭhaṇ carnelian in great quantity and from Tagara much common cloth, and other merchandise brought there locally from the region along the sea-coast. The market-towns of this region are, in order after Barygaza (Broach): Sopārā, and the city of Kalyāṇ, which in the time of the elder Saraganus(?) became a beautiful market-town; but since it came into the possession of Sandanes the port is much obstructed, and any Greek landing there may chance to be taken to Barygaza under guard". (Schoff 42-3).

It is important to note that the region from Paiṭhaṇ to the ports was (as the *Periplus* explicitly states) still heavy jungle filled with savage beasts of prey, not the settled, cultivated territory that it became later. The ox-carts would be used near each end of the journey, or for flat stretches. Much of the goods must have been carried by caravans of pack-animals as the Lamāṇs still carry it. Duarte Barbosa (*DB.* 163) reported the practice at Chaul on the west coast in 1500 A.D. "They bring their goods laden on great droves of trained oxen with pack-saddles, like those of Castille, and over these long sacks thrown across, in which they pack their

goods, and behind them goes a drover (*condutor*) who drives twenty or thirty oxen before him." The local merchants took over near Chaul port, by exchange. The closure of Kalyāṇ port by a hostile Śātakarṇi king (whose name was corrupted in the Greek account to Sandanes) presumably accounts for the brief emergence of Dhenukākaṭa as a Greek trade-settlement, from which so many of the Kārle donors originated.

The Buddhist *Jātakas* give a fairly good picture of this society, and not — as is so often supposed — of society in Magadha and Kosala at the time of the Buddha. They cannot have been written down till well after the Buddha, and may be as late as the 5th century A.D., being composed from southern sources. The tradition was old, details of the life of the Buddha at least believed to be true by the narrators of these stories of his 'previous births'. However, guilds had little immediacy to the kingdom after the *Arthaśāstra*, none in Asoka's edicts ; there is no reason for them to reappear suddenly in Magadha thereafter, with development of closed village production. Yet the *Jātakas* speak of the king assembling eighteen guilds (*Jāt.* 538) several of which are mentioned by name in *Jāt.* 546; in 445, they appear important enough for the king to appoint an unusually able man as their head, a new office. In *Jātakas* 51, 70, 154, 165, there is some confusion between *seṇi* (guild) and *seni* (army), which shows that the tradition had become weakened. Admitting that society changed slowly, the scribes could not have imagined one very far different from that within their elders' memory, so that the Sātavāhana period and territory would suit best. The contrast with the caste-bound *Manusmṛti* leaps to the eye, though the *Pañcatantra* portrays a comparable attitude towards life. The cheerful activity, high position of trade and guilds, whole villages of basket-makers or other commodity producers (sometimes also of Caṇḍālas who spoke their own language) fit our place and period much better than any other. *Jātaka* parents frequently discuss the choice of a profession for the son from a wide range; caste would have fixed the profession if the *smṛti* injunctions were followed. Change of occupation at will, independently of caste, is common in the *Jātakas*, where the brahmins (as in the *Pañcatantra*) may take to trade without

a qualm about the *āpaddharma* (law of hard times) excuse of the *smṛti* literature. A merchant's slave is as well brought up as a son, runs away, passes himself off as the son, marries the daughter of another rich merchant, but is not exposed by the former master when he discovers the deceit; they all live happily ever after. (*Jāt.* 125, *Kaṭāhākajātaka*). The trading environment and pursuit of cash led for the first time to a new *Jātaka* word not seen in classical Sanskrit nor even older Pāli : *lañca*, meaning bribe. The peculiar idiom, 'he eats a bribe' (*lañcam khādati*) used in the context (*Jātaka* 220; 511; cf. also 31, 77, 525, 546) of a corrupt judge selling justice, survives to this day — as does the unfortunate practice of bribing officials to get one's business done.

8.7. No historical treatment of India's cultural development can dispense with consideration of the Sanskrit language and literature.[12] Some form of Sanskrit was spoken by the Aryan invaders of the second millennium B.C. ; in consequence, by such of the country as was Aryanized. Prakritic tendencies (as from classical to spoken Latin) are visible in the Vedas. Asokan, Kuṣāṇa, and Sātavāhana inscriptions make it clear that the *lingua franca* of the country, if there was one, differed very much from the ornate language that the very name *saṃskṛta* implies. Yet the inscriptions and literature of the succeeding period, and for centuries thereafter, were in Sanskrit, regardless of the region of the inscription. How did this change come about ? How does it happen that the classical period of the language follows a period of the vulgar idiom, instead of a steady development from vedic, through classical, into the vernaculars, parallel to the sequence : old Latin, classical Latin, the Romance languages. The answer cannot be given in purely cultural terms. If abstract cultural elements were to be given a life of their own, the world's finest culture should have developed in Central Asia where the Indian, Chinese, and Greek — the world's three leading cultures — intermingled, as is seen from the art forms discovered in places like Turfan. These once populous crossroads of the world's land traffic decayed well before the Mongol conquest, without much visible influence upon cultural history.

The question of the Sanskrit language and culture is therefore rooted in the development of India's productive systems, in particular with the emergence of a special position for the brahmin caste. Special moods such as the "benedictive" suffice to show priestly domination. The northern Buddhist Mahāyāna shows distinct brahmin infiltration, where the southern intellectuals like Buddhaghosa (5th century A.D.) often came from tillers of the soil (*gahapati*). The disintegration of the old intra-tribal brahminism, which concentrated upon ritual, was visible in the rise of Vassakāra and Cāṇakya to ministerial positions in Magadha. The systematic use of brahmins as stabilizing factor of the village economy meant the preservation and development of some ritual, which was the more imposing for being chanted in Sanskrit, with all the weight of antiquity. This would at most have kept the language alive, much as Sumerian was preserved by the Assyrian priesthood ; cuneiform inscriptions could still be graven for Antiochos Soter, hieroglyphics for Cleopatra and the early Roman emperors. Such historical development would explain a bare survival, not the strong literary efflorescence. The full answer lies, therefore, in the new class-relations supported by the changed economy.

The Yajurvedic suppression of vaiśya and śūdra by kṣatriya combined with brahmin was noted in the fifth chapter. Here, a whole new class of rulers over settled territory, not grouped in tribes nor fighting neighbour with neighbour (because of some still higher king or emperor) continued to exploit the working class, to collect heavy taxes from vaiśyas. The three upper castes had the right to sacraments, to instruction from the brahmin, and to the Aryan initiation ceremony of long-forgotten tribal origin ; the śūdra had no such rights. Some newcomers with the requisite power, wealth, and arms could join the upper classes as new high castes, or marry into the higher castes. It is difficult to imagine Heliodoros of the Besnagar pillar being treated as a śūdra by those who had enrolled him into the Bhāgavata cult of Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva. Sanskrit was therefore a fresh instrument to mark the unity of the new upper classes, to emphasize their distance above the rest. The proper accent performs the same function in other

countries. Later, Persian and still later English replaced Sanskrit in the cities and courts of India, for the same class-purpose. The position is similar to that of Latin in Renaissance Europe, French in the 18th century, particularly in Germany and Russia. Asoka had no known court poet nor does the *Arth.* list one among the stipendiaries ; if his public spectacles had any written dialogue, none has survived. Pāli literature has nothing more secular than the *Jātaka* and such *aṭṭhakathā* commentaries, which supplement the *Tripiṭaka* canon. Classical Sanskrit literature therefore marks a fresh reallocation of the surplus. In Prakrit, the outstanding secular work is a collection of 700 stanzas compiled (some written) by Hāla, supposedly a Sātavāhana. The *Bṛhat-kathā* of Goṇāḍhya was, according to a plausible tradition, written for the same court in a country dialect, *Paiśācī* (= 'of the goblins'). All that remains of the latter is in Sanskrit versions like the *Kathā-sarit-sāgara* of Somadeva, and the *Bṛhatkathā-mañjarī* of Kṣemendra, both Kaśmirians. Hāla's graceful genre verse deals with numerous country scenes and common people, without a connecting link between stanzas ; its bent, greatly increased by titillated comment, is mainly erotic, as was not uncommon in Sanskrit literature of that and later date.

European literature may be described as based primarily upon sex (love) and violence (prowess). The Sanskrit, because its chief propagator, teacher, innovator was the brahmin who had in the main to supply recruits for the priesthood is based in the same way upon love and religion, which constitute the common interest of brahmin and prince. If classical Sanskrit treatment of love is franker than in Europe between the Alexandrian and modern writers, it is because the language was understood by a progressively smaller proportion of the people, even when the absolute number increased. It was never a *koinê* as such, only a *koinê* between different regions for the ruling class and its priesthood. Cāṇakya's *Arthaśāstra* could not possibly have been a public textbook on political economy, as its contents show ; in particular, the fourteenth section with its alchemy and poisons would be permissible only for a treatise kept the secret property of a few. Asokan rescripts prove that the Magadhan administrative language was not Sanskrit. The

position of the *Kāmasūtra* (3rd century A.D.?) which models itself upon the *Arthaśāstra* and has therefore been taken to be its contemporary, is totally different. It was meant for the upper classes possessed of Sanskrit and of leisure, who could thereby practice the art of love with a remarkable thoroughness, without the Minnesingers' helpless pining or Hellenistic aberrations. One may observe that Homeric literature is reticent in sexual matters as compared with the frankly salacious Alexandrian ; Greek was the language of the whole people (except perhaps a few slaves) in the earlier days, while its ruling class character in Egypt needs no proof. For India, it is extraordinary that even Jain and Mahāyāna Buddhist monks could read with enjoyment, perhaps compose, *śṛṅgāra* verses which cannot with decency be translated into English ; their customary translation into Latin, in extreme cases Greek, by European scholars again shows the influence of class upon erudition. Nevertheless, the purity of morals, sincere religious devotion, personal asceticism of these monks is not to be questioned ; they cannot be compared to, say, Boccaccio's lascivious clerics. The literary *Śṛṅgāra* is a good counterpart of the voluptuous sculptures which decorate *caitya* assembly halls ; both derive from the luxury of the class in power.

The uniform development and grip of Sanskrit was only made possible by a prodigious technical achievement, that of a grammar whose compact *sūtra* formulae could be memorized by a student during his teen-age period of rigid study, to serve him thereafter without the aid of writing which might give the art away to the vulgar. The sūtra style became standard for the priesthood and for technical Sanskrit ; the *Arthaśātra* and the *Kāmasūtra* combine *sūtras* with the indispensable explanation (*bhāṣya*, commentary). Later works had separate commentaries, which became necessary even for purely literary efforts. The founder of Sanskrit grammar was Pāṇini, who combined the efforts of many predecessors with his own profound observations to give us the oldest scientific grammar known anywhere in the world. The science is necessarily hidden beneath a cryptic style. Nevertheless, Pāṇini killed all preceding grammatical systems, nearly killed further development of the language, and at any rate prevented it from breaking up into

many dialects. His place ,Śālātura, was in the frontier region. The mention of both *kārṣāpaṇas* and the 100-*raktikā* bent-bar coins (*śatamāna*) would come naturally to anyone who knew the market-place of Taxila. His date is, not surprisingly, in dispute ; the word *yavana* in Pāṇ 4.1.49 would normally lead us to date him after Alexander ; the argument that here *yavana* means Ionian Greeks needs substantiation, but if admitted could move the grammarian back at most to the march of Xenophon's Ten Thousand. Before that time it is unlikely that Ionians could have been heard of, even as traders, in India. If admitted, it remains necessary to discover when the Ionians became known to the Indian frontier population at the other end of Persia's sphere of influence. A date before Darius I seems unlikely. Pāṇini has at times been dated to the 8th century and even earlier ; but such misplaced patriotism pays no attention to the fact that regular coinage such as the *kārṣāpaṇa* goes back only to the 7th century B.C. The first commentator Kātyāyana explains the reference as *yavanāl lipyām*, the first reference to any script, which must be after the Greek invasion. The greatest of the commentators, Patañjali, refers in passing to Puṣyamitra, which dates him (but for the usual quibbles) as a few years earlier than 150 B.C. Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* gains its strength and charm from a wealth of references to common life. This did not change his attitude towards the wonderful instrument, speech, whose laws he and his predecessors had discovered. Words are eternal. One might tell a potter, make me such and such a type of pot. No one goes to the grammarian to say, make me such and such a word. Thus, in Sanskrit, a material object in general is *padārtha*, which literally signifies ' word-meaning ' ; semantic idealism is therefore ingrained in the idiom, as it was in the mind of the chief proponent of Sanskrit, the brahmin.

The later vedas and upaniṣads are full of word-mysticism. Floridity became increasingly a characteristic of Sanskrit so that the use of twisted construction, intricate compounds, innumerable synonyms, overexaggeration make it more and more difficult to obtain the precise meaning from a Sanskrit document. Magnificent eulogies regularly fail to mention the name of the king to whom the panegyric is addressed, let alone

the particular feat being praised. Technical literature suffers most from this victory of form over meaning though Sanskrit did help reduce it to concise — though incomprehensible — mnemonic formulae. Modern Latin names have been invented for plants to make their identification precise. Sanskrit terminology is anything but precise. The Sanskrit *ananta* ('without end') is used in medical treatises of no less than fourteen different species, from a foot-high leguminous shrub to a Rubiaceous tree. This not only betrays local variation, influence of local usages and language (which really maintained the vigour of Sanskrit), but shows how Indian science degenerated into secret disciplines. Most of the fourteen plants are in use to this day. Every Āyurvedic physician maintains that his is THE real *ananta*, the next man (who treats the same disease by a totally different *ananta* plant) an ignorant quack.

At its best, Sanskrit literature is exquisite, with an intricate pattern of beauty. Even at its best, it does not give the depth, simplicity of expression, the grandeur of spirit, the real greatness of humanity that one finds in the Pāli *Dhammapada*, the *Divina Commedia*, or *Pilgrim's Progress*. It is the literature of and for a class, not a people.

The language suffered from its long, monopolistic association with a class that had no direct interest in technique, manual operations, trade agreements, contracts, or surveys. The class did have leisure enough to write their tenuous ideas in a tortuous manner above the reach of the common herd, and to unravel them from such writings. Prose virtually disappeared from high literary Sanskrit. Words that survived in literary usage took on so many different supplementary meanings that a good Sanskrit text cannot be interpreted without a commentary. The glosses are often demonstrably wrong, and succeed only in confusing the text — which has to be restored by critical methods first developed in Europe. The older terms used in administration (*e.g.* *Arth.*, and copper plate charters) were forgotten. In some cases where obscurity was deliberately imposed (*i.e.* Tantric mysticism), cult and meaning of the text vanished together. There were astounding mnemonic developments, but they too contributed to the same end, by overspecialization and particular jargons for every

discipline. There still exist *śāstris* who can recite the whole of one veda, in any order (literally backward and forward) without mistake in a single letter or accent. Others know the whole of Pāṇini's grammar and the *Amarakośa* dictionary by heart without exciting special comment. Yet, there is no individual who really knows the Sanskrit language as a whole. Mathematical and astronomical works put into *kārikā* form are easily memorized, but incomprehensible to the uninitiated because each number and operation is denoted by many different words that have other meanings in ordinary usage. The *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* of Varāhamihira does give some practical hints, though mostly for sacred construction and images; it belongs to the Gupta age. The later works on iconography, painting, architecture which are still extant do not tally with measurements of statuary, buildings, and chemical analysis of pigments; the artists and masons went their own way. This may be contrasted with the treatise of Vitruvius on architecture. There is no Sanskrit work of any use to the blacksmith, potter, carpenter, weaver, ploughman. The books that might have served people higher in the social scale contain far too much traditional filling, that had neither use nor application, to be of any use. The lack of annals and historical work has already been noted. Ritual, philosophy, theology, and poetry take up the bulk of Sanskrit writings. The distinction between Sanskrit and Arabic in this respect should also be considered. Arab works on medicine, geography, mathematics, astronomy, practical sciences were precise enough to be used in their day from Oxford to Malaya. Yet Arabic too had been imposed with a new religion upon people of many different nationalities. The difference was that "Arab" literati were not primarily a disdainful priest-caste. Those who wrote were not ashamed to participate in trade, warfare, and experimental science, nor to write annals.

8.8. The earliest known classical Sanskrit inscription of any extent belongs to Rudradāman (*EI*. 8.43 ff.), dated 150 A.D. It is inscribed on the same rock as Asoka's famous Girnār rescripts, with impressive contrast both of language and content. A full seventh of the inscription has disappeared by deliberate or casual damage to the rock-face. The main achievement

proclaimed is the restoration to double size of the shattered dam that had been 'constructed by the vaiśya Puṣyagupta, the *rāṣṭriya* (governor) of Candragupta Maurya, and completed with a canal system by the *yavana* (= Persian) king Tuṣāspha under Aśoka Maurya'. Asoka had not thought this worth commemorating in his admonitions to his subjects. Rudradāman is very proud of "having done the work from his own treasury with great flow of money without levying taxes, special contributions, or forced labour from the *paura-jānapada* citizens", though the repairs were mainly and explicitly for their benefit. He boasts of having stopped human killing except in war; of having conquered or raided numerous provinces from Avanti to the Indus and Aparānta plus the Niṣādas (forest-tribes); of having exterminated the heroic Yaudheyas, and twice defeated the 'lord of the Deccan, Sātakarṇi' who was spared because of their relationship (by marriage). His treasures are proudly mentioned, gold, silver, jewels; still more proudly his mastery over (Sanskrit) words, whether prose or poetry, in all the literary moods and expressions. There is no question of this being court flattery. It was clearly a method followed to endear a ruler of foreign descent to the indigenous ruling class, whose tastes and training he had absorbed in his boyhood. The Vāsudeva included by Rājaśekhara (10th century A.D.) among famous royal patrons of Sanskrit literature and drama may have been the last Kuṣāṇa emperor of about 200 A.D. Such kings as the 'Great Satrap' Rudradāman could talk of protecting the four *varṇa* castes all the more convincingly if they talked in good Sanskrit and backed it up by gifts to brahmins (implied in the Girnār inscription). It did not then matter that the agent (*niyukta*) was Suviśākha, son of a Pahlava (= Pehlevi, a Persian) barbarian Kulaipa; the proper attitude to cows, brahmins, and Sanskrit mitigated the lamentable choice of parents on the part of both Satrap and governor.

The absence of reliable biography or dated literary sources compels us to make a generalization on such evidence as exists: The great period of classical Sanskrit literature is intimately bound (in its various localities) to the rise of feudalism from above. This contrasts with classical Greek and Latin, whose

decline was completed by the onset of feudalism. The reason is once again to be seen in the different historical background, and the different function of feudalism in India. Similarly, a secondary, minor, Sanskrit efflorescence and the rise of the vernacular literature are to be attributed to the first successes of feudalism from below. Yet, just one stanza by an unknown author describes what must have been a familiar result of some ruthless feudal governor's oppression : villages deserted by all but a few peasant families on the verge of being starved out. This is no. 1175 in the anthology *Subhāṣitaratnakoṣa* of Vidyākara. I know of no other in the whole of Sanskrit literature. Not every new class gives rise to a great new literature, for not every new class is progressive, or feels the need for literature, nor does it necessarily perform the task of reorganizing the whole of society into a new, more productive form. Experience, however, shows the converse to be true : Every great new literary form implies the unfolding of a new social form, headed by some new class, except under socialism, which accounts for the time lag in new peoples' literature. Whenever the type of society crystallizes, the class turns from the task of rallying the whole of society behind its own leadership to its proper work of steady exploitation ; the literary forms correspondingly harden and culture decays. If it did not speak at first in the name of the whole of mankind, the new literature would appeal neither to a wide contemporary public, nor to posterity ; if it continued to speak for all humanity it would necessarily become offensive to the class whose interests it must serve, the class with which it came into being. This shows why, in the literature of most class-societies, the great names come at the beginning. The argument can always be adduced that every one of these great writers had a long tradition before him, that Homer was perhaps the last of a great line of hymn-singers. The fact remains that they ended the old tradition within whose forms their work began, making it obsolete. That Homer did not invent the Greek language, nor Shakespeare the English drama is obvious. Obviously, there were English dramatists before the Elizabethans, who owe a great deal to Seneca and the classical drama for their formal approach, and undoubtedly something to the medieval church

mystery play and the Renaissance court-masque. Yet Marlowe and Shakespeare are rightly hailed as the initiators of a new theatre and a new literature ; not as those who stand at the climax of the old, in spite of the fact that English dramatists never again rose to their height. We may, therefore, take the rise of Sanskrit and other Indian literature, from time to time, as the indication of social developments in the region and period whenever the locality and date can be determined with some degree of certainty.

The first great name to survive in classical Sanskrit literature is that of Aśvaghoṣa. He was a northern Buddhist, traditionally associated with the Kuṣāṇa court, and some monastery. The poems and dramas he composed on the life of the Buddha, and on early Buddhist themes are a new departure, for there seems to have been no Sanskrit drama before him. The credit for stimulating this new form was at one time handed to the Greeks, particularly by those who find the Indians helpless without a foreign model. The Sanskrit drama, however, is far from the Greek in structure, or mechanism. The unities are not even thought of. It is as far, both in language and thought, from earlier mystery plays that might presumably have charmed Indian audiences. The language is highly ornate, *śṛṅgāra* imagery of the most erotic type is accepted as normal ; women, menials, the common people, are addressed in Sanskrit but themselves speak Prakrit. In Aśvaghoṣa, the Prakrit approximates to living idioms, later it became completely artificial. The speech and love-code are characteristic of a mannered court life, which otherwise appears in the theme of almost all such dramas. The virtually solitary exception is the *Mṛcchakaṭika* (Little Clay Cart) of Śūdraka, which deals with the troubled love of a brahmin Cārudatta for a courtesan Vasantasenā. It is significant that the play ends with a popular uprising and change of dynasty ; far more significant that the meagre surviving tradition uniformly connects Śūdraka with the Sātavāhanas, in whose reign alone this most human of Sanskrit plays seems to have been possible. Other plays depict gods (in kingly fashion, with human weaknesses), epic heros, legendary rulers or high ministers delicately cast in a mould that would flatter some

contemporary princeling. Śūdraka was also to be converted by tradition into a king. Royal poet-dramatists were not unknown. Great literary figures were generally invested with magic powers, like Virgil in the European middle ages. The same tradition divested them of all biographical detail. Often, the Indian literary critic is fortunate if he can prove that the supposed author really existed, was not as imaginary a character as those in his supposed work.

The most important function of Sanskrit was to lend weight and sanction of antiquity to new cults, observances, ritual. The actual ritual might be older than the vedas, but was local, and embarrassingly absent from the accepted brahmin scriptures. The process of mutual assimilation required equal sanction of authority that could be passed off as genuine. The vedas did not help, as their text was fixed by immutable routine, so that not even a single syllable could be changed. The *smṛtis*, once rewritten, could not be tampered with soon, or the conflict would mean loss of all authority. This meant raising new texts to venerable antiquity in some plausible fashion which would allow revision of their contents. Thus the Bhṛguid recension of the *Mbh* has been noted. The purāṇas were still handier. They had originally been semi-historical accounts which started with the creation and finished with dynastic genealogies. Their revision is intimately connected with that of the *Mbh*., which shows that both were urgently necessary to the brahmins. The need to keep the dynastic accounts (which occurred as prophecies) up to date clearly invited frequent re-edition. Both the *Mbh*. and the *purāṇas* came to be ascribed to one Vyāsa — literally, 'the expander' — who was gradually credited with the authorship of the vedas too (*veda-vyāsa*). According to R. C. Hazra (see note under *DKA*) pp. 188-9, the inflation took place in two stages. The first, (approximately 200-500 A.D.) saw the accretion of *smṛti* material. The second, (from the sixth century onwards) took wing into higher regions, so that the *purāṇas* sprouted new addition on gifts, sacrifices to propitiate adverse planets, consecration of images, glorification of the brahmins, the greatness of pilgrimage centers &c. The second period corresponds to the hardening of feudalism from

above, with greatly increased density of village settlement. As for revision, the most comic example is of the *Bhaviṣya-purāṇa*, whose very title "the future past" is self-contradictory and whose printed text contains matter that must have been continually added till not more than ten years before going to press.

A good example of such absorption of local cults is the Karagā festival at Bangalore. It is the special annual fertility rite of the Tigaḷas, who are now a professional caste of market gardeners, known to have emigrated from North Arcot district. The main cult object at this festival is an earthen pot containing a gold fetish. The animal sacrifices formerly made to the pot are now reduced to one; the rest have been replaced by cutting lemons, or symbolized by masses of boiled rice. In the final procession, the main participant (*arcaka*, hereditary Tigaḷa priest) carries the pot on his head, but is dressed as a woman. His wife has to remain in seclusion all during the festival. The Tigaḷa representatives, at least one from each family, march or dance about the *arcaka* and cut themselves with sharp swords; but no blood flows during the ordeal. If the head priest feels any mysterious obstacle to his progress, limes are cut and scattered until the supernal or infernal powers cease their opposition. The observances are obviously not Aryan, and have admittedly been brahminized for less than 150 years. This means that the gold fetish is taken to represent the spirit of Draupadī, wife of the five Pāṇḍavas; the husbands are represented by limes in the triple *karagā* pot, which also contains some ordinary water and some coconut water. The chief cult of the Tigaḷas is situated in the splendid Dharma-rāja temple, supposedly in the name of the eldest Pāṇḍava brother. It might be kept in mind that *Dharmarāja* is the name of Yama, the death-god; the connection, if any, with the late Buddhist Dharma-yāna cult which seems to have reached prominence just before Muhammad bin Bakhtyār's conquest of Bengal, has not yet been traced. A brahmin priest is now associated with the cult, and remains in attendance even during the secret rites practised by the disguised *arcaka* and another Tigaḷa who has to lead the procession. These rites are not divulged, but obviously the whole festival is taken

over by the Tigaḷas from their women. The pot has to be made by hand and sun-dried. It must be made from the sediment of one particular reservoir, and the ceremony ends with the pot being thrown back into the pond, though the golden *śakti* of Draupadī is surreptitiously fished out by the priest for use next year. The ceremony lasts nine days, to end with the great procession on Caitra (April) full-moon, but the untouchables have their own *karagā* a couple of months later, without much fuss. For the Tigaḷa *karagā* festival, every temple in the city, no matter how high and orthodox the god, sends an idol representing its deity to follow in the procession. This is mutual acculturation. What interests us most is that a Sanskrit account (still unpublished) has been fabricated of the cult and ritual, in true *purāṇa-Mbh* style, within the last 75 years.

When Indian vernacular literature began in Aryanized regions, the Sanskrit model was often followed. The names that still remain in the memory of the common people, the weaver Kabīr, the petty *kuṇabī* grain-dealer Tukārāma, wrote in the popular idiom, using figures of speech familiar to the common man. Nevertheless, their songs too sing in what may be called religious terms. Religion had become so generally the tool of the state — which meant the ruling classes — that any protest had automatically to be expressed in the same ideological framework. The theological upheavals at whose foundations lay great changes of property relations show this just as clearly. Religion was the brahmin's existence, serving the court because it held the surplus producers in its firm grip. Its chief social manifestation, caste, had been a great advance at one time in the formation of a peaceful society; with hardening of classes, the very same mechanism served to fetter society, to discourage innovations dangerous to those who profited from the *status quo*.

Notes and References :

1. The chronology of *CAI* and *ITM* is followed, for lack of a better; cf. J. van Lohuizen de Leeuw, *The "Scythian" Period*, (Leyden 1949); the general approach to this and the Gupta period is outlined in my paper on the *Basis of ancient Indian history* (*JAOS*. 75.35-45; 226-237).

2. R. E. Mortimer Wheeler: *Rome beyond the imperial frontiers* (Pelican Books A. 335; London 1955), particularly pp. 141-182, gives a comprehensive survey of archaeological as well as literary data.

3. V. V. Mirāshī described the low-grade lead-alloy coins of the Sātavāhanas, found in the Tarhāḷā hoard, in *JNSI.* 2, p. 83-94; the Purāṇa list (*DKA.* 36) is augmented with three hitherto unknown Sātavāhanas, Kumbha, Karṇa, and Saka. For the name Sātavāhana (incomplete) on a copper coin perhaps of the founder of the dynasty, the same author in *JNSI.* 7, 1945, pp. 1-4. How slender even this numismatic evidence really is for the dynastic history is seen from the discussion between S. L. Katare and Mirashi, *JNSI.* 16, 1954, 77-85, and the note by P. L. Gupta, *ibid.* 86-9. Sātavāhana silver coins are rare, which means that they mostly used other people's currency, occasionally counterstruck as with Nahapāna and Gotamiputra; northern punch-marked coins also circulated in the south at this time, so that new coinage by the Sātakaṇis in a silver-poor region was not necessary. The absence of such coinage would indicate the prevalence of barter-exchange for the common people.

4. J. Przyluski: *JRAS.* 1929, pp. 273-279; terminations — *karṇa* such as in *Tūṇakarṇa*, *Masūrakarṇa* and perhaps Jatūkarṇa lead to the suspicion of other such clan-names (*JAOS.* 75, p. 41, footnote 9).

5. J. H. Speke: *A journal of the discovery of the sources of the Nile*, chap. 1; originally published London 1863, but the Everyman's Library ed. (no. 50) gives the details on pp. 25-7, with map. Lieut. Francis Wilford's article was published in the *Asiatick Researches* 3, 1801; it is remarkable that anyone should have approached the confused purāṇas with such assurance, to make an ingenious conjecture, so triumphantly verified.

6. For the *aśvamedha* sacrifices of Puṣyamitra, *ITM.* 175 ff. The *Mālavikāgnimitra* reference is made more likely by a *Harivaṃśa* (3.2.40) stanza to the effect that a Kāśyapa *senānī* (commander-in-chief) would perform the horse-sacrifice. The *gotra* is wrong, but the title *senānī* was continued at least by the early Śuṅgas on their coins, one having been found at Kosam. Puṣyamitra was not the only one to perform such a sacrifice, but the impression was apparently heightened by his having been the first to do so after the Asokan ban.

7. The most reasonable interpretation of the Vikrama era may be that extracted from the story of the Jain *ācārya* Kālaka. The 2000th anniversary of Vikrama was celebrated with due pomp in 1943, though neither press-agents nor the luminaries publicized were able to shed any light on the problem. The memorial volumes issued on that occasion proves only the futility of such "research": in English, *Vikrama volume* (Ujjain, Scindia Or. Inst., 1948) in Hindi, *Vikrama nibandha saṃgraha* (Kānpūr, 1944?). None of the mutually contradictory essays in such volumes proves anything beyond the will to believe.

8. For the *Manusmṛti*, I use in general the standard Nirṇaysāgar Press text with commentary of Kullūka; also the edition (Calcutta 1932) by Gangānāth Jhā with commentary of Medhātithi; the translation is by G. Bühler, *SBE*. 255. Whether the locality of origin, the work is well suited to the village economy and the village priest's mentality, which account for its growing authority.

9. See my note on *The avatāra syncretism and possible sources of the Bhagavadgītā* (*JBBRAS*. 24-25, 1948-9, 121-134).

10. For the Heliodoros inscription: V. S. Sukthaṇkar, *ABORI* 1.59-66; collected works (Memorial edition), vol. 2 pp. 266-272 proved the word-order and terminology to be more Greek than Prakrit. The original hasty publication and haphazard translation by J. Marshall: *JRAS*. 1909, 1055-6, made Bhāgabhadra a vassal of Antialkidas; see successive approximations to the correct reading by: J. Fleet in *JRAS*. 1909, 1087-92; A. Venis. *JRAS*. 1910, 813-5; J. Fleet, *ibid*. 815-17.

11. The letter of Mātṛceṭa was published in a translation by F. W. Thomas (*IA*. 32, 1903, 347-9; 1904, 21; 1905, 145). The identification with Aśvaghoṣa seems to me extremely unlikely; the main common factor is that both were famous Buddhist authors of whom very little survives.

12. For Sanskrit literature in general, A. B. Keith, *History of Sanskrit literature* (Oxford 1928) is comprehensive, though not sympathetic. For special characteristics of frustration, see my note: *The quality of renunciation in Bhartṛhari's poetry* (Fergusson College Magazine, Poona 1941; reprinted with changes — and misprints — in *Bhāratīya Vidyā* (Bombay) 1946, pp. 49-62; for Sanskrit literature of developing feudalism, my preface to the edition (with V. V. Gokhale) of the *Subhāṣita-ratnakoṣa* of Vidyākara (about 1100 A.D.; the oldest known Sanskrit anthology) *HOS*. 44, 1956, yet to appear.

CHAPTER IX

FEUDALISM FROM ABOVE

FEUDALISM[1] from above means a state wherein an emperor or powerful king levied tribute from subordinates who still ruled in their own right and did what they liked within their own territories — as long as they paid the paramount ruler. These subordinate rulers might even be tribal chiefs, and seem in general to have ruled the land by direct administration, without the intermediacy of a class which was in effect a landowning stratum. By feudalism from below is meant the next stage (discussed in chap. X) where a class of land-owners developed within the village, between the state and the peasantry, gradually to wield armed power over the local population. This class was subject to military service, hence claimed a direct relationship with the state power, without the intervention of any other stratum. Taxes were collected by small intermediaries who passed on a fraction to the feudal hierarchy, in contrast to direct collection by royal officials in feudalism from above. In both cases, remnants of previous systems survived (locally or in form) down to the primitive food-gathering tribe. The basic difference

between these two stages derives from the slow increase of trade and commodity production.

9.1. Some fedual developments were inevitable with the growth of small kingdoms over plough-using villages. The later Sātavāhanas not only followed the Kuṣāṇas in carving images of princes (as at Nāṇeghāṭ) but adopted the northern system for administration :

"*Sidham.* On the first day of the second (fortnight of) winter in the eighth year of *siri* Puḷumāvi, king of the Sātavāhana family, this reservoir was excavated by the householder (*gahapatika*)... resident at Vepuraka village of the captain (*gumika*) Kumāradata in the Sātavahani-hāra district (*janapada*) of the great general (*mahāsenāpatī*) Khaṃdanāka.[2]"

The word *gumika* (Skt. *gaulmika*, later "captain of thirty"), though defaced in this epigraph, (of about 140 A.D. at Myākadoni), is attested for the late Sātavāhana period by Lüders 1200. The use of the genitive does not clarify the exact sense in which the village belonged to the captain, or the district to the field-marshal ; yet if their names were important enough to be mentioned, they must have formed a direct chain between the king and the householder. The existence of the *gulma* indicates (as in the *Manusmṛti*) the need to police village colonies. Presumably, the tax-collection mechanism is also described here, for the Bellary district seems to have been the original home (far from Āndhra proper) of the Sātavāhanas; hence the oldest settled portion of their state.

The word *gulma* in the *Arth.* means thicket (as it continued to do later), compaction (e.g. *valmīka-gulma*), wharf (*gulma-tara-deya* = wharf-and-ferry toll) but is not a military term except perhaps in the general sense of compact mass. The *Mbh.* 1.2.15.17 and *Amarakośa* 2.8.10-11 show that *gulma* had, by the period under discussion, become a combined army platoon of nine *pattis*, amounting to 9 chariots, 9 elephants, 27 horse and 45 foot in all. This is a new development in military usage, which deserves to be discussed. The *Arth. patti* was not a tactical unit but infantry in general, the heavy-armed soldiers of the phalanx. Elephants, chariots, and even the horsemen had a complement of *pādagopa* foot-guards ; not members of *patti* regiments, but fighters never-

theless, not menials as some translators would have it ; these had to be highly mobile, hence with lighter accoutrements. According to *Arth.* 10.4, the elephants were of use in smashing through walls, stockades, towers, gates, barriers, or massed infantry formations, to round up broken troops, and for tactical surprise—just like modern army tanks. But they had subsidiary utility that the tank does not allow, covered by the modern lorry, bulldozer, and tractor : transport (especially of treasure), haulage of heavy equipment, making paths, clearing roads through jungle and waste, which included swimming across water and the rapid construction of log bridges. These military engineering uses were confirmed afresh in 1941-1945 during the Burma campaign (cf. *Elephant Bill* by *J. H.* Williams, Penguin Books 1120), when both Japanese and British commands used elephants, often more effectively than machinery.
These military engineering uses were confirmed afresh in 1941-
warfare, liable to panic suddenly, always more dangerous to their own ranks, forget their work during a campaign, and the need for effective use of the foot-guard screen. Good generals like Hannibal and Seleukos would not have insisted upon a totally unreliable arm. On the other hand, a working elephant needs 600 pounds of balanced green fodder daily, or the equivalent which means from 30 to 50 pounds of grain every day, supplemented with vegetables and other articles of diet (*FOM*.1. 354-5). So, large concentrations of elephant troops could not be maintained in settled country without far better transport than any then known in India. This accounts for the development of the *patti* as a squad of one elephant, one chariot (both useful for the senior officer), five heavy-armed foot-soldiers, three armoured cavalrymen, and perhaps a suitable escort of light-armed foot-guards. These minor groups could effectively quell any resistance in the villages, while they could also be used against robbers, without straining the resources of the countryside. Such dispersed troops would be gathered together for a major campaign. Their main function, however, as is clear from the inscriptions and later references, was to "enforce law and order" in the villages, not for tactical use in normal warfare as *patti* or *gulma* units. In a pitched battle

against a regular army in the field, the cavalry, infantry, elephants would have to be grouped separately; the chariots were by now useless except for the commanding officers (*Beal* 1. 82-3). Efficiency would be low unless the troops had been drilled in command and manoeuvre in these different groupings. Dispersal by police-*gulmas* over the territory would inevitably lessen the effectiveness of the troops for real war.

Of the period from the early 4th to the middle of the 8th centuries, the first two hundred years cover the Gupta empire which, with Vākāṭaka allies, controlled most of the former Mauryan domain except parts of the south and Kaśmīr, but included Bengal, a most fertile and productive region which was now properly settled for the first time. Assam was penetrated by the time of Harṣa. The contrast between the Mauryan and Gupta empires is neatly pointed by the inscription of Samudragupta (Fleet 1) on the Asokan pillar at the Allahabad fort. The ornate panegyric, in high classical Sanskrit, signed by one Hariṣeṇa, differs in more than language and style from the simple Asokan rescript. It is a long recital of Samudragupta's victories, mostly over kings explicitly named. The kings of Āryāvarta (the Gangetic basin) were exterminated. Chinese travellers' accounts show that this homeland was directly administered by the emperors, with taxes which the visitors felt to be negligible, perhaps by contrast with China. The Chinese pilgrim Fa Hian reported of the U. P. of his day:

"The people (in the Middle Kingdom) are numerous and happy. They have not to register their households or attend to any magistrates and their rules. Only those who cultivate the royal land have to pay (a portion of) the grain from it. If they want to go, they go; if they want to stay on, they stay. The king governs without decapitation or (other) corporal punishments. Criminals are simply fined, lightly or heavily, according to the circumstances (of each case). Even in cases of repeated attempts at wicked rebellion, they only have their right hands cut off. The king's body-guards and attendants all have salaries. . . There are no butchers' shops and no dealers in intoxicating drink. In buying and selling commodities they use cowries. Only Caṇḍālas are fishermen and hunters and sell flesh meat. After the Buddha attained to *parinirvāṇa*, the kings of the various countries and the heads of the vaiśyas built vihāras for the priests, and endowed them with fields, houses, gardens and orchards, along with the resident population and their cattle, the grants being

engraved on plates of metal, so that afterwards they were handed down from king to king without anyone daring to annul them, and they remain to the present time", (pp. 42-3 of Fa Hian's travel record, "Record of Buddhist Kingdoms", trans. James Legge, Oxford 1886).

This describes conditions about 400 A.D., in the heartland under the Gupta emperor Candragupta II (Vikramāditya). Officials had not as yet acquired feudal rights and powers. Land outside the *madhyadeśa* was certainly taxed, having to pay the sixth portion of the grain harvested. Presumably, the core of empire was specially favoured with lighter taxes. There were certainly wine-distillers, and vendors in the countryside, according to the *Amarakośa*. The freedom to stay on the land or to go would signify the absence of serfdom. But then, it is not clear how the Buddhist abbeys held land "along with the resident population and their cattle". No two translators render the Chinese text alike at this point. To judge from standard land grants, the rights of the state over the people were transferred to the recipients, which meant the receipt of fixed tribute but no proprietary or ownership rights.

The real profit came from conquered tribes and kings outside what had been prime Magadhan territory. The kings of the Deccan (*dakṣiṇāpatha*) were restored to their thrones after defeat; the tribes apparently were left to their own devices after submission, but all of them had to pay tribute: *Sarva-kara-dānājñā-karaṇa-praṇāma*... says part of the enormous compound, implying tribute, obedience to commands, homage. It is most important to note that though the tribal names are at times old, like the Yaudheyas, or the even older Ārjunāyanas, they were not in the unsocial *jana* stage but had become *gaṇas* recognizing the existence of society beyond the tribe. So far as may be seen, every one of them had developed military leadership (Fleet 58; 59 etc.) for external aggression; almost all (including Nāgas) had kingship from within the tribe. Even the forest-savages, whose submission is also mentioned in the pillar inscription, had kings at the time or acquired kings soon after (Fleet 21-31; 81). Thereafter the chief glory of a king would be to proclaim that he had reduced neighbouring rulers, by force of arms, to a tributary status (*Har.* 100). The very term *sāmanta*, formerly "neighbour" or "neighbouring

king" came hereafter to mean "high feudatory". The Guptas began with an ordinary king Śri-Gupta, whose son Ghaṭotkacha is given a slightly higher title by his descendants; but from Candragupta I, the title is "great king of kings".

The wealth previously accumulated by officials, satraps, princes, tribal chiefs always provoked raids for loot which were highly profitable. This had been the case since the end of the Mauryans, and continued to be till the middle of the 19th century. To hold the country steadily under a large empire, as the Guptas managed to do for about two centuries, implies something more than a raid, namely an expansion of the productive basis. This meant new village settlements in hitherto uncleared territory, with the initial profits of lucrative trade in new areas. Bengal, the new Gupta development, was ideal for the settlement; the less fertile Deccan also received its first cover of permanent agrarian villages at this time. The method of settlement differed entirely from Mauryan state enterprise which had relied upon forced location of śūdras, absolute control of metals, state participation in production and trade with an economy that required immense circulation of currency. It is notable that we have excellent gold and some copper coins of the Guptas, but the silver coins of the period are negligible in quantity, poor in quality, and imitate the western Satraps in fabric. The Gupta settlements could not be made by force because of the vast distances, relatively plentiful supply of uncleared land (at the time), and the difficulty of clearing off food-gathering savages from their own terrain, which produced much less under the plough than the alluvial plain of the Ganges. The actual procedure evolved, that of penetration by religion combined with private trade, introduced private property and a class structure in former tribal areas under the guise of caste. The central state helped by stopping petty warfare between local chiefs and by giving some protection against savages. It helped, whenever strong enough, by arranging matters beyond the scope of any single village, namely waterworks, regulation of trade, policing of trade-routes — all done through subordinate feudatories or governors. The last known repairs to the Mauryan dam at Girnār, now lost without trace, seem to have been in A.D. 456 (Fleet 14) by Cakrapālita, son

of Parṇadatta appointed governor of Surāṣṭra by Skandagupta. The name Parṇadatta is unquestionably Sanskritized from the Persian (cf. J. Charpentier in *JRAS* 1928, pp. 904-5). The greatest work of this sort was by king Bhoja (died 1055-6 A.D.), a tremendous reservoir at Bhojpur. Created by just two carefully placed dams of moderate size, the lake covered an area of 250 square miles. Inasmuch as the greater barrage was intact at least till 1888 (*IA*. 17, 1888, pp. 348-352) while the lesser (cut by Hoshang Shah) was about 87 feet high and between 500 and 700 yards long, it would be very easy today for our modern five-year plans to restore this body of water at a cost far below that of any other project with comparable results. Though king and warrior, Bhoja left a mark upon Sanskrit literature, in which his is one of the outstanding names because of his literary theory, original works, and patronage of contemporary authors. With him declined the great tradition of royal men of (Sanskrit) letters which had begun not later than Rudradāman, and had really flowered under the Guptas and Harṣa, though the kingdom of Dhārā was not to be compared to the two great empires. In none of his writings (that I have been able to consult) is there any mention of revenue administration, land settlement, ownership of land.

The state protected and encouraged private settlement, on condition of paying in kind, much lighter taxes than under the Mauryans. Nevertheless, this very prosperity killed the empire. The growth of the virtually self-contained village meant considerable decrease of commodity production per head. As noted in chapter VII, the central army and bureaucracy could be maintained over so large a country only if there were great commodity production with extensive trade and sufficient cash taxes. The highly profitable new trade went down. The guilds that had been so powerful under the Sātavāhanas vanished gradually but completely. The crucial problem : how to retain the indispensable minimum of caste technicians and artisans in each village was, as will be shown, solved neatly without guilds, slavery, cash payment, or conversion of their product into commodities. This meant that the tax in kind had not only to be collected but increasingly to be consumed by local officials and dispersed *gulma* police garrisons, or by a constantly travelling

court, because the trade whereby the grain could have been converted into cash (essential to maintain stationary concentrations of the imperial forces) had dwindled. This in turn led to the decline of a central army, the rise of local princelings from new tribes, ambitious feudatories, or daring officials. Tribute collection would become impossible; hence the inevitable collapse of empire after which the whole vicious round started once again. Foreigners who had come for trade or service[3] would now change into invaders — a time-honoured metamorphosis — when more could be gained by force of arms.

9.2. The new economy showed two simultaneous but opposing trends; prosperity and concentration of wealth at a few ports and capitals, with decline of the greater cities in general. The courts, both central and provincial, shone with a new luxury. The finest sculpture and painting, the best caves at Ajaṇṭā, belong to this period, though the fine multiple cooperation that produced Sāñcī and Kārle was increasingly replaced by donations from the court, nobility, and men of wealth. In the criticisms made, however, it is essential not to forget that there WAS for some time a beautiful new literature as well as sculpture, painting, architecture; the new society at the first success of feudalism from above was not only more peaceful, less extortionate, but also decidedly more cultured. The progressive decay with ingrowth of village economy only strengthens the contrast. The finest efflorescence of classical Sanskrit literature, however, coincides with the first great increase in number of village settlements. Though his very century still remains unknown, Kālidāsa is reasonably assigned to the court of Candragupta II Vikramāditya, between 380 and 410 A.D. Bhāsa may have been earlier. The third outstanding dramatist-poet, Bhavabhūti, flourished as one of the court poets of Yaśovarman of Kanauj, defeated (and probably killed) in a transient raid about 736 A.D. by Lalitāditya-Muktāpīḍa of Kaśmīr. Harṣa of Kanauj (606-647 A.D., approximately) was himself a dramatist of high ability, though nasty-minded critics hint that his many court poets (led by the great Bāṇa, who also wrote the most ornate Sanskrit prose) prepared works to be signed by the emperor. The Prakrit

spoken by women and servants had in these conventional dramas become as artificial as Sanskrit, as far away from the

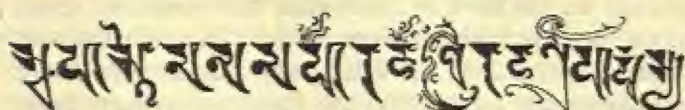


Fig. 37. Signature of Harṣa on the Banskhera copper plate (*EI*. 4. 208-11): *sva-hasto mama mahārājādhirāja-śri-Harṣasya*. The plate grants a village to two brahmins.

popular idioms of the common people. It was the golden age of India, say our historians. Indeed, more gold coins of the Guptas have been discovered than of any preceding (or most later) kings. Nevertheless, in this golden age, the great Magadhan city of Patna, which had been a capital of Candragupta II, dwindled to a village (*Beal* 2.86), though the countryside remained as prosperous (*Beal* 2.82) and fertile as under the Mauryans. The great Asokan monuments were looked upon as of superhuman construction. The main Gupta capital Ujjain was never the world's greatest city as Patna had been in its great days; the succeeding capital Kanauj was still less impressive. Kings thereafter kept on the move[4] with army, harem, court, and secretariat, which could not be fed without eating up the surplus wherever it was produced. Grants were usually dated from the *skandhāvāra*, "camp headquarters".

Harṣa (descendant of Puṣyabhūti, almost certainly of tribal origin) was a sun-worshipper, follower of Maheśvara (*Beal* 1.222-3; *EI*. 4.211; 7.158) and Buddhist, devotee of *ahiṃsā* and war-lord — all at the same time. Opposition rose in Bengal, which with its new villages and convenient ports would naturally resent the power of Kanauj. This has some connection, too, with the ruin of an important trade center like Patna. The eastern king Śaśāṅka – Narendragupta, last of the northern Guptas (*EI*. 6.143-4), whose raid progressed from Bengal as far as Maukhari territory and who treacherously murdered the king (*Beal* 1.210; *Har*. 186) was ultimately beaten back by Harṣa. The remarkable feature of Śaśāṅka's invasion is its novel religious guise: he destroyed Buddhist foundations, and burnt down the tree under which

the Buddha had reached perfection (*Beal* 2.118-122). This shows some conflict at the basis which, for the first time, was fought out on the level of theological consciousness. Such disguise was new to feudalism from above. Harṣa lost a war with Pulikeśin (*Beal* 2.256; *EI.* 6.10), who was in turn beaten by his south-eastern neighbours, the Pallavas, without benefit of theology. Yet, under Harṣa, as under the Guptas (some of whom followed the Bhāgavata cult) temples, Buddhist *vihāras*, and brahmins prospered with fresh donations.

The religious quarrel was presumably connected with the constant warfare to reduce neighbouring monarchs to tributary status. Harṣa fought incessantly for thirty years (*Beal* 1.213). During this period, his army increased, according to the same report, from 5000 elephants, 50,000 foot, and 2000 cavalry to 60,000 war elephants and 100,000 cavalry and some corresponding number of infantrymen. A fraction of these forces would have strained the resources of any country and empire in the early seventh century A.D. At a special enclosure in Prayāg, Harṣa, following "the example of his ancestors" distributed treasures to the Order, to brahmin priests, and to the needy every five years. "After this, the rulers of the different countries offer their jewels and robes to the king, so that his treasury is replenished" (*Beal.* 1.233). The charitable ritual act does not hide the tributary function of the quinquennial assembly, characteristic of feudalism from above. Bāṇa (*Har.* chap. VII, particularly pp. 212-3) describes the panic and devastation caused by the royal progress through the king's own home territory.

Whatever the impression of prosperity received by the Chinese pilgrim-scholar (who had been welcomed at court, given special facilities for travel, and studied in residence at well-endowed quarters of the rich university of Nālanda) there was something about life that a part at least of contemporary society and of the upper class found unsatisfying. How else would one explain the new fashion of suicide by leaping off the high sacred *vaṭa* tree (*Beal* 1.232) at Prayāg near the junction of the Ganges and Jumnā; why did a number of older people want to end their life in the waters, not on the banks, of the sacred Ganges?

The village not only killed the cities and guilds, but shows its definitive ideological mark upon the superstructure of the 'golden age'. The curious rites not previously acknowledged by brahminism, local observances, and pilgrimages crammed into the purāṇas were interpolated during this very period. The magnificent cave-sculptures on Elephanta island in Bombay harbour (questionably dated on stylistic grounds about the 6th century A.D.) are completely anonymous without a single inscription, a characteristic of the developed feudal period. Distant merchants were presumably not involved in their foundation. Everyone then knew whose work it was, while the structure of society appeared so changeless that the unlabelled construction would be remembered "forever", as still happens with numerous uninscribed funerary *samādhis* and temples of about two centuries ago. It has to be remembered that village culture had to impress the aboriginal food-gatherers into whose territory it spread. Not only did there arise new parochial castes to replace both guild and tribe, but civilization regressed. The primitive kṣatriya (Strabo 15.1.30) rite of *satī*, originally of killing widow or concubine to accompany the dead chief into the next world, grew in fashion among the upper classes. The very word means 'chaste, faithful wife'. The Greeks had been shocked by the spectacle of a widow's voluntary immolation after the death of a frontier kṣatriya (Strabo 15.1.62; Diodoros 19.30, 33-34). The practice is not known to the Mauryans, nor the *Jātakas*. The *Mahābhārata*, completely rewritten just before the Guptas, shows revision in favour of the barbarous *satī* practice. The impressive rite was never a mass practice. The widow lady of high family who did not volunteer for the burning had to lead a miserable life, as did higher-caste widows in general. The nun's observance was reflected in the tonsure and plain red or white clothes associated thereafter with upper-class, particularly brahmin, widowhood. *Satī*, rare as it was, served to increase the prestige of the feudal nobility. A memorial at Eraṇ dated 510-11 A.D. (Fleet 20) tells us that the wife of an army captain Goparāja followed him in death as *satī*. Harṣa's mother Yaśomatī followed the gruesome fashion about 604 A.D. (*Har.* 163-9) IN ANTICIPATION of her husband's imminent death. Harṣa's widowed sister

Rājyaśrī was about to climb the pyre when rescued by her brother. They succeeded jointly to Grahavarman's throne after the formality of an election by the Maukhari nobles. On the other hand, there is no record or tradition of any Gupta queen having immolated herself as *satī*. Prabhavatīguptā, widowed daughter of Candragupta II, was long regent for at least one of her Vākāṭaka sons. One may add that *satī* stones, not older than the later feudal period, are still honoured in the villages.

On a lower level, the mark of the village is seen in the development of the ordeal for witnesses, though the incidence of both crime and punishment was low. The *ChUp.* (6.16) mentions ordeal by heated iron for a suspected thief. The *Arthaśāstra* never once refers to it. The *Manusmṛti* devotes just two verses (*Ms.* 8.114-5) ; the *smṛtis* of Yājñavalkya and Nārada give the ordeal in far greater detail, including ducking, boiling oil, heated axe-heads, plough-shares &c. Our chapter II shows how it has survived among the Pārdhīs to this day, not for truth-telling as such but as sign of approval by tribal deities. Finally, the *Arthaśāstra* (4.10) prescribed capital punishment for sale of human flesh. The courtiers cut off and sold their own flesh in a vain attempt to save Harṣa's father from a fatal illness (Har. 153; *cf.* also 199, 224), a magical practice. Sale of human flesh for witchcraft is seen in Bhavabhūti's *Mālatīmādhava* 5.12, and is frequently mentioned in the *KSS* (25.183, 187 &c.). Amoghavarṣa I, the long-ruling Rāṣṭrakūṭa (middle half of his 9th century A.D.) represented the height of development of his dynasty; but he boasts, under the sacrosanct title Vīra-Nārāyaṇa, of having cut off his finger in the temple of Lakṣmī (perhaps at Kolhāpūr) to protect the subjects from some unspecified calamity (*EI.* 18.255). From the next century, the ruder Gāṅgas began to cut off their own heads as votive offerings in the temple, before the main image. Society in the golden age thus slipped a bit further back towards the primitive, a reciprocal action of savages upon the brahminism that was breaking them to the plough.

9.3. Hiuen Tsang describes Harṣa's north India (*Beal* 1.75-88) during the first half of the seventh century. There is no fundamental difference from the description given by Fa

Hian about 400 A.D. (*Beal* xxxvii-xxxviii). Allowance must be made in both cases for the point of view of a Chinese pilgrim who could not see feudalism in India, just as the Greek view had to be discounted in the account of Megasthenes almost a thousand years earlier which shows India without slavery. The Chinese traveller was impressed by the lack of torture* in examining recalcitrant witnesses or accused, and light punishment; also by the ordeals used in the few extreme cases among a generally honest, peaceful, law-abiding, kindly, hospitable population. The northern Hindu tabu on eating onions and garlic, as also certain kinds of flesh (ox-flesh at the head) was already strong then, and indeed persists to this day. The dirty tortuous streets within cities and villages (large, in the *Arth.* tradition of 100 to 500 families; here called "walled towns"), lined with stalls, where untouchables who lived beyond the walls had to keep apart to the left, contrasted with the scrupulous, ritualistic personal cleanliness of the people. There was little tailoring; the costumes described in *Har.* were for a select few, not the common people. Food was eaten without spoons, or even chopsticks, with the fingers. Provincial annals were kept on special 'blue rolls'. The actual rulers were the (former *paura-jānapadas*) kṣatriya nobility, but the caste system had already ramified endlessly.

"As the administration of the government is founded on benign principles, the executive is simple. The families are not entered on registers, and the people are not subject to forced labour (*conscripted*). The private demesnes of the crown are divided into four principal parts ; the first is for carrying out the affairs of state and providing sacrificial offerings ; the second is for providing subsidies to the ministers and chief officers of state ; the third is for rewarding men of distinguished ability ; and the fourth is for charity to religious bo-

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* Scholars, including J. J. Meyer, see torture prescribed for the examination of the accused in *Arth.* 4.8. It seems to me that the word *karma* there means torture as further punishment of recalcitrant criminals whose (serious) crime is not in doubt; not a method of obtaining a confession but part of the sentence. Mutilation and chastisement are alternatives to, or supplementary to cash fines (which could be worked out by penal slavery) elsewhere in the *Arth.*; e.g. 4.10, hamstringing or the cutting of the Achilles tendons for a robber who enters a city or citadel without permission, or carries off goods through a breach in the walls, with the alternative of a 200 paṇa fine.

dies, whereby the field of merit is cultivated (*planted*). In this way the taxes on the people are light, and the personal service required from them moderate. Each one keeps his own worldly good in peace, and all till the ground for their subsistence. Those who cultivate the royal estates pay a sixth part of the produce as tribute. The merchants who engage in commerce come and go (freely) in carrying out their transactions. The river-passages and the road-barriers are open on payment of a small toll. When public works require it, labour is exacted but paid for. The payment is in strict proportion to the work done....The military guard the frontiers or go out to punish the refractory. The soldiers are levied according to the requirements of the service ; they are promised certain payments and are publicly enrolled. The governors, ministers, magistrates, and officials have each a portion of land consigned to them for their personal support....In cultivating the land, those whose duty it is sow and reap, plough, and harrow (*weed*), and plant according to season ; and after their labour they rest awhile. Among the products of the ground, rice and corn are most plentiful....The mixed classes and base-born differ in no way (as to food and drink) from the rest, except in respect of the vessels they use, which are very different both as to value and material....They always barter in their commercial transactions, for they have no gold and silver coins (*Beal* 1.87-8).... If it was necessary to transact state business, he (Harṣa) employed couriers, who constantly went and returned. If there was any irregularity in the manners of the people of the cities, he went amongst them. Wherever he moved, he dwelt in a ready-made building during his sojourn. During the excessive rains of the three months he would not travel thus. Constantly in his travelling-palace he would provide choice meats for men of all sorts of religions. The Buddhist priests would be perhaps a thousand, the brahmins five hundred." (*Beal* 1.215).

The combined survivals of the *Arth*, Asokan, and *Ms.* economies are noteworthy. When feudalism became stronger (as in landlord-dominated China), the character of rulers and people changed too. With later feudalism from below, the smaller merchant was squeezed by innumerable restrictions and imposts. The statement that the cultivator rested a while after his seasonal labour implies a free peasantry, without serfdom or landlords' oppression. The ominous spread of closed village economy is proved by the reference to barter trade without coinage. No coins of Harṣa are in fact known (except two low-grade issues of doubtful ascription), which contrast with the substantial Mauryan and Kṣatrapa hoards of silver coins, and the prolific Gupta gold coinage including gold coins of

Narendragupta-Śaśāṅka who held the rich trade ports of Bengal. Harṣa's was the last, great, personally administered, centralized empire. Thereafter, kingdoms were smaller, and the class of feudal landowners — in fact if not in theory — grew in number, power, importance to be the intermediary stratum between king and subjects, to be the real basic class of the state. [After this period, the later feudal peasant was under increasing constraint, whether because of higher land-rent, taxes and less paying land, or the corvée and force used by the barons. Indeed, these two were symptoms of a common root cause. Inevitably, later, rigorous feudal judges started to flog and torture the people they were to examine, while control of the land was more and more in the hands of those whose main function was to squeeze out the maximum taxes but pass on a minimum to the higher authority.] Hiuen Tsang does not tell us what proportion of land was held directly by the crown, nor what forms of land-ownership and ground-rent prevailed on the rest of the land. Harṣa's mobile palace and the swarming entourage have been attested by his court-poet Bāṇa (*Har.* 58-70; 207-213). The Chinese pilgrim does not mention Harṣa's feats of dramaturgy (though his successor I-tsing did so), and special patronage of Sanskrit literature, a new development of the Gupta period, foreshadowed under the Kuṣāṇas and Kṣatrapas. It was necessary, because of the upper class of kṣatriya courtiers with their auxiliary brahmins whom the artificial language and mannered literature separated from the common herd that produced food and luxuries for them.

Indian school texts now credit the Guptas with a 'revival of nationalism', a phrase piously repeated by all. Actually, no extant 'golden age' court drama or other literature makes direct reference[5] to any Gupta. Kālidāsa's *Mālavikāgnimitra* is related to the Śuṅgas; the *Mudrārākṣasa* of Viśākhadatta purports to describe the masterly intrigue whereby Cāṇakya placed Candragupta Maurya securely upon the throne of Magadha. Only the purāṇas among contemporary documents mention the early Guptas, contemptuously grouped with many other petty kings: "The Ganges banks, Prayāga (Allahabad), Sāketa (Fyzabad) and the Magadhas — all these districts (*janapadān*) will be enjoyed by (kings of) Gupta lineage....

All these kings will be contemporary, barbarous (*mleccha-prāyas*), unrighteous (or impious), dishonest (or liars), niggardly, highly irascible." The dynastic name is derived from the termination °*gupta* of each king's personal name, showing that the line had no respectable origin as clan, tribe, or caste; the idea of paying brahmins to invent a genealogy, as happened so frequently later,[6] does not seem to have arisen. The first Gupta emperor (319-20 A.D.) Candragupta I married a Licchavi princess, Kumāradevī; not only did he issue coins jointly with her but the son, great conqueror Samudragupta, boasted of his mother's family. Samudragupta's son Candragupta II (Devagupta), the first to assume the glorious title Vikramāditya (and many others like Sāhasāṅka), and perhaps the most prosperous of all the dynasty, married a Nāga princess, Kuberanāgā. However, the father Samudragupta had exterminated all Nāga kings, and the surviving Nāgas were but little distant from savagery except perhaps for the soon extinct royal families. The daughter of this union was Prabhāvatīguptā, wedded to the allied Vākāṭaka (a tribal name, perhaps also Pākoṭaka) king, another political marriage of the series. The first known record of the latter house was by a simple Vākāṭaka *gahapati* householder, who made a donation to the Buddhist foundation at Amarāvatī about 150 B.C. (*EI.* 15.261-8). The first Vākāṭaka king Vindhyaśakti preceded the Guptas. The initial secret of Gupta expansion was just that they were unrestricted by tribal or caste usage, to the extent of building up the professional army necessary for tribute collection. The heterogeneous marriage alliances developed somewhat later, both for political aims and to gain patent of nobility. The Licchavis,[7] for example, were treated as a low caste almost beyond the pale (*Ms.* 10.22) by some brahmins; in Buddhist and Jain tradition, they still retained a very high place. Licchavi political and military importance had vanished before Asoka. Extracts from a lost play, the *Devīcandragupta* of Viśākhadatta, and a stanza quoted in the ninth chapter of Rājaśekhara's *Kāvyamīmāṃsā* refer to a romantic exploit by a Gupta prince, who disguised himself to kill the Khaśa (or Śaka) chief that held the queen, his elder brother's wife, as hostage. He later married the widowed queen, whose name is

given as Dhruvadevī or Dhruvasvāmini. Remarkably enough, Dhruvadevī is the name of another queen of Candragupta II, mother of Kumāragupta (Fleet 10, 12, 13) who succeeded his father and was succeeded by the martial Skandagupta. There may be something in the play's garbled report, for contemptuous references to a Gupta who killed his own brother and married the widow may be seen in later charters (*EI*. 7.38 ; 18.248). The main praise of the Guptas is found mostly in their own inscriptions, forgotten for a millennium, until read by European scholars from Prinsep onwards in the 19th century. Even the names of the emperors had passed from memory. Once read, published, and translated, the records were eagerly seized upon by the nascent Indian bourgeoisie as contradiction of the constant British slogan : ' India has no history, except conquest by a continuous succession of foreign invaders.' Far from the Guptas reviving nationalism, it was nationalism that revived the Guptas.

9.4. Copper-plate charters of land-gifts survive by the thousand from this period almost to modern times. The most important have been published. Until about the 9th century, the charter gifts are to temples (as they had been to Buddhist vihāras earlier, according to Fa Hian), but far oftener to brahmins unconnected with any specific temple. Even later, the gifts to brahmins continued to predominate, the ostensible reason for the gift being always acquisition of merit for the donor and his parents, the increase of his glory and success. This disguised a real purpose in the productive basis. The new brahmin was an essential adjunct of the state in reducing the mechanism of violence ; his preaching of submission reduced the total administrative cost. At the period considered, he was much more : a pioneer into wild territory, the main instrument of change to plough-village culture. His knowledge of the calendar has already been discussed. In addition, he knew of seeds, crops, cattle-breeding (the cow was sacred as well as useful) all of which had to precede any use of the plough. Immigration, often from a distance at royal invitation, gave him knowledge also of distant markets, and the value of crops useful for exchange. He was permitted to enter tribal forests where armies could penetrate only with great difficulty

and little profit. As a peaceful witch-doctor, his ritual and way of life imposed themselves quite easily upon savages. The traders also needed his help as priest. Buddhist monks had deliberately refrained from developing a ritual of their own, so that brahmin and Buddhist went side by side. It is comic to read long, meaningless arguments today about a certain king being 'Hindu' or Buddhist when Harṣa, for example, could not have understood the meaning of the word Hindu, and found no difficulty in dedicating a Buddhist play like the *Nāgānanda* to the goddess Gaurī. He and his ancestors, like so many other kings of high or low standing (sometimes of doubtful origins hardly one step above the tribal chieftains from which they had evolved) stressed their respect for the four-caste system. This meant in essence the preservation of a class structure in a rather primitive stage of production; the south in effect failed to develop more than just two of the four supposed original vedic castes: brahmin, śūdra.

Say Hiuen Tsang of early seventh century Indian Buddhism:

"The *Vinaya* (*liu*), discourses (*lun*), *sūtras* (*king*), are equally Buddhist books. He who can entirely explain one class of these books is exempted from the control of *karmadāna*. If he can explain two classes, he receives in addition the equipment of an upper seat (*room*); he who can explain three classes has allotted to him different servants to attend and obey him; he who can explain four classes has 'pure men' (*upāsakas* = devout lay-followers) allotted to him as attendants; he who can explain five classes of books is allowed a surrounding escort. When a man's renown has reached to a high distinction, then at different times he convokes an assembly for discussion....If one of the assembly distinguishes himself by refined language, subtle investigation, deep penetration, and severe logic, then he is mounted on an elephant covered with precious ornaments, and conducted by a numerous suite to the gates of the convent. If, on the contrary, one of the members breaks down in his argument, or uses poor and inelegant phrases, or if he violates a rule in logic and adapts his words accordingly, they proceed to disfigure his face with red and white, and cover his body with dirt and dust, and then carry him off to some deserted sport or leave him in a ditch. (*Beal* 1.81)....By the side of the river Indus, along the flat marshy low-lands for some thousands of *li*, there are several hundreds of thousands of families settled. They are of an unfeeling and hasty temper, and are given to bloodshed only. They give

themselves exclusively to tending cattle, and from this derive their livelihood. They have no masters, and, whether men or women, have neither rich nor poor; they shave their heads and wear the *kāṣāya* robes of Bhikṣus, who they resemble outwardly, whilst they engage themselves in ordinary affairs of lay life. They hold to their narrow views and attack the Great Vehicle....But though they wear the robes of religion, they live without any moral rules, and their sons and grandsons continue to live as worldly people, without any regard to their religious profession." (*Beal* 2.273).

The latter quotation is of the utmost interest because it shows what the still pastoral and tribal descendants of Aryans continued to do on the banks of the river which had been 'set free' by Indra. Whether the robes were a Buddhist feature or a habit adopted much earlier which might actually have influenced the Buddha's choice through eastern Aryans, is not clear; probably the former. The rest shows how Buddhism gradually developed towards Lamaism, or turned into a theological game restricted to careerists who profited mightily. Epigraphy confirms this by donations in the name of, or by the lay-followers of, some distinguished monk. The statues of the period and contemporary frescos of Ajaṇṭā, with a succession of gigantic Bodhisattvas (wearing lofty jewelled crowns, or seated upon costly thrones), who always tower high above the ordinary human beings, show how far the religion had departed from the spirit, actions, and precepts of its founder. The interminable groups of well-endowed *saṃghārāmas* enumerated by the Chinese pilgrim, and details given of the perquisites of a resident scholar or teacher at Nālanda show what the acquisition of wealth had done to the Buddhist Order. The administration of vihāra property (as of temple estates in later days) tended to become the profitable monopoly of a single family. Control, security, and continuity of tenure were assured (as in Ceylon), by the tonsure of some younger son who would duly be elected abbot of the monastery. The problem did not arise with temples, for the priests were vowed neither to celibacy nor to poverty and could take direct hereditary control, though merchant houses often helped. The *saṃgha* now depended upon the higher classes, without the minimum contact with the common people which was needed even to serve those higher classes well. A tooth-relic of the Buddha

was exhibited at the fee of one gold piece (*Beal* 1.222). Naturally, prophecies were current of the end of the religion (*Beal* 1.237 &c.), when such and such an image should have sunk out of sight into the soil (*Beal* 2.116). That the religion itself had already sunk virtually out of sight in the mire of wealth and superstition would seem clear to modern eyes not blinded by faith. Such luxury might explain the attempt to murder Harṣa after setting his great *saṃghārāma* on fire (*Beal* 1.220-1) as due to economic discontent, disguised by theology, as such quarrels hereafter tended more and more to be camouflaged.

Brahminism, with its new-pioneer upper caste, was on the whole more convenient for the new, intermediate landholding classes that had begun slowly to emerge. It was less costly, after vedic sacrifices had been abandoned, than the vast, unproductive monastic foundations, while its monopoly of ritual made it a better adjunct of the state. The brahmin could peacefully reduce tribes to castes, more efficiently than the monk. The Buddhist decline was inevitable with the decline of the great, militant, highly centralized, but personally administered empires; both had now become uneconomic. The religion could no longer turn a Harṣa from war to peace, as it had Asoka. The large monasteries paralleled (in their social function and class service) the huge central army. Both were too expensive and progressively unnecessary for the growing number of self-contained villages, while local barter had mostly replaced trade for cash. The social features of primitive Buddhism had been taken universally for granted, so that its civilizing influence remained. What was lost had perhaps never been properly grasped: that the individual must train his mind consciously to good, clean, SOCIAL thoughts, just as he needs to train his voice to song, or the hand and eye for mastery of any craft. Proper cultivation of the mind is as necessary for the good health of society as that of the body for the health of the individual, and of the fields for the maintenance of production.

Two kṣatriya merchants established a temple of the Sun in the Bulandshahr district of U. P. (Fleet 16) which a brahmin endowed with a perpetual lamp in A.D. 465-6. This

is completely against standard brahmin and kṣatriya caste practice. What should caste mean, when a fighting ruler like Gotamīputra claimed to be 'the unique brahmin'? Another Śātakarṇī of the same period married the daughter of the Śaka foreigner Rudradāman. Like her father, the princess showed more Sanskrit (Lüders 994, at Kaṇheri) than all the Sātavāhanas put together. Nevertheless, Vāsiṭhīputa Puḷumāyi claimed to have "put an end to the intermixture of the castes". The chieftains of food-gathering *āṭavika* tribes, who had increased tribal property by trade or as mercenaries in more advanced armies, had to find some way of converting that gain into personal property. They had to rise above the rest of the tribe in some way. For them, the brahmin could discover ancestors in the epics, or write them into some ancient text. Ceremonies like the *hiraṇyagarbha* described in the purāṇas[3] were actually performed by such chiefs (*EI.* 27. 8-9; 17.328; *IA.* 19.9 ff.). Here the priest would insert the ambitious candidate into a golden pot, the 'womb'. The ritual for a pregnant woman was then recited, followed by the birth-*mantras*, after which the king stepped out from his contracted position to thank the priest for his rebirth, in so many words. Thereby, he acquired a high caste, while the obliging brahmins acquired the vessel of gold as part of their fee. The tribes or portions of a tribe that did not change over to plough agriculture bred far less rapidly than those who preferred the new method of getting a more regular and ampler food-supply. Nevertheless, the same name is often found for a peasant or craftsman *jāti* as for a food-gathering tribe in the neighbourhood. The essentials of tribal society were retained in this transition, namely endogamy — except for the chief, now become raja, who thus further separated himself from his former equals. The commensal tabu now meant not receiving food cooked by anyone of lower caste. Some tribal priests were also metamorphosed into brahmins during this process. This corresponded to the basic change from the exclusive tribe to a newly formed portion of a far greater general society.

The brahmin immigrants often failed to bring their womenfolk along, which meant intermarriage with local settlers, and accounts for the *smṛtis* allowing seven generations of such

intermarriage to make a brahmin of a śūdra, (*Ms.* 10.64-5). The whole Jaisiā caste of Nepal, like the Nairs of Malabar, developed from such regular brahmin intercourse, which at the same time counts as irregular philandering according to brahminical theory. Kings such as Lokanātha in Bengal were not ashamed to proclaim their origin from brahmins and śūdra women (*EI.* 15.301 ff.). The *nṛpati-parivrājaka* ('royal ascetic') line of king Hastin and Saṃkṣobha (A.D. 528-9) which ruled in the 'eighteen forest kingdoms' (modern Aṭhārāgarh) were descended (Fleet 25) from one such ascetic Suśarman, whose name undoubtedly denotes a brahmin. The only explanation is that Suśarman preferred marrying into a tribe to the ascetic's life. The ancient kingdom of Champā in Indo-China was similarly founded by an Indian high-caste adventurer Kauṇḍinya, who cowed the local aborigines by superior prowess in archery and married their 'Nāga' chieftainess Somā to found a prosperous dynasty. That the savages often reckoned descent solely through the mother would help such assimilation till the villages, and with them a rigid caste system, clamped down.

9.5. It is useful to quote the terms of one land charter, namely by the Vākāṭaka king Pravarasena II in his 18th year; it was a gift of a village to a thousand brahmins collectively, of whom 49, presumably heads of families, are named (Fleet 55) :

"Now we grant the fixed usage, such as befits this (village) such as has been proved by former kings, of a village which belongs to a community of those who know all four vedas. Namely, it is not to pay taxes; not to be entered by regular troops or higher officials; it does not carry with it the right to cows and bulls in succession of production, nor to the produce of flowers and milk, nor to the pasturage, hides, charcoal, nor to mines for wet salt. It is entirely free from all corvée obligations, carries with itself the right to all treasure-trove. And this condition of the charter should be maintained by the brahmins, and by (future) lords; namely (that the grant endure) as long as the sun and the moon, provided that they commit no treason against the state or any of its components, under succeeding kings; that they are not brahmin-killers, nor thieves, adulterers, poisoners of kings, and the like; that they do not wage war; that they do no wrong to other villages. But if they act otherwise, or assent (to such acts), the king will commit no theft in taking the land away."

The conditions are not unusual, only their explicit statement. The village had already been occupied by the brahmins who would henceforth cultivate it without taxes. But clearly they had no rights over previous occupants — obviously non-cultivating pastoralists — who are carefully protected. The village was to be peaceful, never to take to arms, nor encroach against other villages. Such disarmed villages were the norm of settlement, the brahmin grants used only for seeding. Immunity from entry by royal soldiery, officials, police is a veritable boon in all such grants; the very helplessness of the villages made it simple for any such person to tyrannize over it. The seemingly perspicacious argument is put forward that before the day of firearms, even a peasant's tools would be good weapons, and resistance to the king's soldiery was always possible if tyranny went too far. The charters prove otherwise, while the argument takes no account of the mutual isolation of villages, of the weight of caste and state against arms for the peasants, and the special training of the *gulma* soldiers denied the villagers. To this day, officials and police can tyrannize over almost any Indian village with little show of force.

Fig. 38. Signature of Dhruvasena I of Valabhi (525 A.D.) *sva-hasto mama mahārāja-Dhruvasenasya;* on a copper-plate land-grant to a brahmin Rotghamitra.

Other land-grants show how settlement was further developed plot by plot in waste land. The sixth century Dāmodarpūr plates (*EI.* 15.113-145) are supposed to show purchase from the state, as are the Farīdpūr (*IA.* 1910, 193-216) plates. Both are quite clear, however, to anyone who has no preconceptions. In both sets of charters, merchants who wished to make a donation to brahmins for the acquisition of merit applied to the local authorities. The registrars and elders were in attendance while surveyors measured off plots, always in uncultivated and untaxed waste land. The plot was then assigned to a brahmin (or temple), after payment had been made as "the king's sixth share" by the donor. WHAT HAD BEEN BOUGHT WAS NOT THE LAND, BUT THE RIGHT TO CULTIVATE IT IN PERPETUITY WITHOUT TAXES, which normally amounted

to a sixth of the produce. The powerful trade and rapid expansion of village settlements in Bengal are to be seen incidentally from such grants.

Local tenure differed from place to place, and older usages were always respected as far as possible. In Fleet 80, a village was given away by consent of some assembly to temple priests, along with its inhabitants, who must have been some special class of śūdras. This puzzling gift of the *mahārāja mahāsāmanta* Samudrasena belongs to the 7th century Punjab; in other places, the people given away were conquered aborigines. But village workmen were sometimes "given" too (*JBORS* 2.423, 407, 415; *EI.* 15.1ff., 363). In some plates, individual plots are granted. As time went on, the grants became more and more generous. Yet one feature remained unchanged. The recipients of a whole village gained at most the rights the state would normally claim. That is, they collected the taxes already fixed by usage. No portion of the tax was to be passed on to the state or any state official, but the donee had not the right to increase such taxes, nor any property rights over land and cattle. The *Arthaśāstra* theory of state ownership of land survived, but meant primarily that the state would claim taxes on cultivated land, in which settler's rights were guaranteed on the whole. Again, caste was responsible for limiting oppression of the cultivator to a certain extent. His fellow-castemen, originally descended from the same tribe, would stand by him, if it came to the worst; such a local *jāti* would normally extend beyond a single village. In the *Harṣacarita* and the successive Dāmodarpūr plates, the development of more and more high officials is to be noted; feudalism from above tended to become heavier with time.

The following extract from a land grant of Harṣa in the 25th year (of his reign) illustrates a general process:

"From the great royal camp-headquarters, provided with boats, elephants, horses and (accompained by) victory, at (the village of) Kapitthikā. Harṣa, the devotee of Maheśvara, issues this command to the feudatories and officials (*mahāsāmantas, mahārājas, dauḥsādhya-sādhanikas pramātāras, rājasthāniyas, kumārāmātyas, uparikas, viṣayapatis,* regular and auxiliary soldiers, state servants and others) assembled at the village of Somakuṇḍa, which belongs

to the Kuṇḍadhānī *viṣaya* in the Śrāvastī *bhukti*; and to the people there resident :

" Be it known unto you all ! Having ascertained that this village was enjoyed by the brahmin Vāmarathya on the strength of a forged charter, I have therefore broken that (copper-plate) charter and taken (the village) away from him. And for the increase of spiritual merit (of my parents and elder brother, all deceased) have bestowed it as a donation according to the *bhūmi-chidra* (waste-land) usage, to serve as an *agrahāra* to (the brahmins) bhaṭṭa Śivasvāmin and bhaṭṭa Vātasvāmin. . . This donation extends to its proper boundaries, and (is conferred) along with the *udraṅga* (tax), together with all income that might be claimed by the royal family, but exempt from all obligations. (It is to be regarded) as a piece taken out of the district. (It is given) in the succession of sons and sons' sons, for as long as the moon, sun, and earth shall endure.

" Knowing this, you should assent to this (grant), and the resident citizens should, in obedience to my orders, make over only to these two (hereafter) the precise measure of the (sixth) share of the produce, the land-title tax (*bhoga-kara*), cash taxes and other dues. And render unto them the service (claimed by the state). . . The *dūtaka* for this (deed) is the *mahāpramātāra mahāsāmanta* śrī-Skandagupta; and by order of the high officer in charge of the records (*akṣapaṭala*), the *sāmanta mahārāja* Īśvaragupta." (*EI*. 7.155-60).

The feudal officers are themselves ' great kings, neighbouring kings ', for the first time. Nevertheless, none of them had the power to make such a grant on his own initiative, nor was their consent necessary. In fact, it is usual to find the royal signature on charters that give nothing more than a small field. The court travelled with the camp, secretariat and all. The grant is made to brahmins by a Buddhist emperor who proclaims himself only a devout follower of Śiva. Finally, such grants had become lucrative enough to forge. Forgeries have actually been found among the copper-plates hitherto brought to light. Enterprising brahmins could and sometimes did employ their knowledge of Sanskrit profitably for direct falsification of a charter. This was quicker than the invention of a royal genealogy, or the falsification of some *purāṇa*, and discovery seems to have involved no punishment. A contemporary Arrian would have found it difficult to assert that no Indian was ever known to lie.

The following considerations might help clarify the above mass of detail. The question of private property in land makes no sense if regarded from the modern bourgeois point of view, namely the right to buy and sell. In the first place, most of the actual cultivators had emerged from a tribal stage where land was only territory, while primitive slash-and-burn cultivation had made individual plots useless till the day of the plough and cattle-manure fertilization. Secondly, the holding of a field, even in the sense of mere right of cultivation was a privilege as well as proof of membership in a community. Loss of all land would not be possible unless the individual were expelled from the peasant sub-group, usually a *jāti* caste, Finally, within a village community that produced virtually no commodities, land would have no purchaser, while uncleared waste or marginal land was still to be had for the cultivation. The only conditions were payment of taxes to the king and perhaps of a nominal adoption fee to the previous village community, unless the new settlers could form a separate community of their own. This state of affairs continued almost to the end of the Mughal period, with local variations.

The charters refer almost exclusively to special conditions of brahmin grants. The words *karṣataḥ karṣayataḥ* in such grants literally 'let him cultivate (himself) or cause to be cultivated (by others), do not indicate the creation of feudal property and landlordism. That is, the brahmin was prevented by caste and his priestly duties from doing the actual cultivation, as a rule. Yet the land was invariably tax-free when donated to a brahmin, so that cultivation by anyone else would legally be an evasion of taxes, unless special exemption were granted as in the charters. The general rights in land may be inferred from these conditions and later survivals. The village huts were surrounded by a palisade, and that in turn ringed about with a broad grazing common. Beyond this lay the food-producing lands of the first settlement, also held in common and taxed in common. The only right to a plot or field in this prime cultivated land was by assignment, to one who actually cultivated it and only as long as he cultivated it, by the real

owners, the village as a whole represented by the village council. Beyond that lay the waste lands which could also be assigned, by the council or the king, to any individual (brahmin or not) who wanted to clear a field or plantation. This was bestowed as long as he paid the taxes, and cultivated the land — unless he had received the rare exemption above. Later, with an increasing labour supply and a new, growing market, the brahmin indirect cultivation acted as model for the formation of landed, and even feudal property, except that the state claimed some tax and service from the recipient.

9.6. The processes of land-settlement of the Gupta and succeeding periods, outlined in the preceding sections, can fortunately be illustrated by records, archaeology, and field-work. One regional example may be followed through in detail, just to bring the development sequence into historical focus. The Kadamba tree (*Nauclea cadamba*, or more likely) *Anthocephalus cadamba*, is known to most parts of India, particularly the warmer, for its striking orange flowers. The edible fruit are now used mostly in country medicines. The *Anthocephalus* also has the name *hali* (*ri*) *priya* 'beloved of the peasants', or 'beloved of Hari (Viṣṇu)'. It is still worshipped as a totem by the Gāvaḍās and other tribesmen of the Western Ghāṭs.[9]

The Kadambas, however, are known to history as a dynasty in the southern Deccan, and Koṅkaṇ.[10] The founder Mayūraśarman is placed, (with the usual scholarly disputes) in the

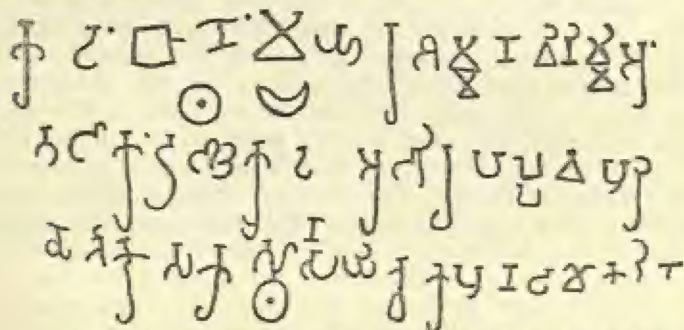


Fig. 39. Candravalli tank inscription of the Kadamba Mayūraśarman: *Kaḍaṃbāṇāṃ Mayūraśarmmaṇā vinimmiaṃ taṭākaṃ dubha Trekūṭa-Abhīra-Pallava-Pāriyātrika-Sakasthāna-Sayindaka-Puṇāṭa-Mokarika.* Sun and moon between lines 1-2.

late 4th century A.D. His only known inscription[31] is at Candravaḷḷi, west of Chitaldroog (Mysore State), in Prakrit: "This pond was brought into being by Mayūraśarman of the Kaḍambas (who had) beaten the Trekūṭa, Abhīra, Pallava, Pariyātrika, Sakasthā (na), Sayindaka, Puṇāṭa, Mokari". (Fig. 39). The reservoir still exists, though the genuineness, reading and interpretation of this epigraph have been contested. A grant at Malavaḷḷi (*Ep. Carn.* 7. Sk. 264 also in Prakrit with a brief terminal Sanskrit benediction) by an unnamed but quite early Kadamba gives a number of villages to a brahmin for the service of the local god, Malapaḷideva. The villages had previously been granted by the eastern king Śivaskandavarman, of the Pallava line which, though autochthonous without question, affected a brahmin nomenclature, e.g. Mānavyasagotra Hārītiputra Śivaskandavarman. The monolithic Pallava sculptures and temples at Māmaḷḷapuram (Mahābalipuram) are among the most notable in India. These Pallavas are not to be confused with the Pahlava (Pehlavi) invaders at Junāgaḍh and the north-west known to the *Ms.*

Mayūraśarman is then heard of in a Sanskrit inscription of his descendant Kākutsthavarman (*EI.* 8.24-36) at Tālaguṇḍa, dated to about the middle of the 5th century A.D. It tells us that Mayūraśarman was first opponent, then a feudatory of the Pallavas:

"Having swiftly defeated in battle the frontier guards of the Pallava lords, he occupied the inaccessible forest stretching to the gates of Śrīparvata. He levied many taxes from the circle of kings headed by the great Bāṇa. So he shone, as with ornaments, by these efforts of his which made the Pallava lords frown — exploits which were charming since his vow began to be fulfilled thereby and which secured his purpose as well as the start of a powerful raid. When the enemies, the (Pallava) kings of Kāñcī, came in strength to fight him, he — in the nights when they were marching or resting in rough country, in places suited for assault — lighted upon the great ocean of their army and struck it like a powerful hawk. (Thus) did he sustain that calamity, relying solely upon the sword-arm. The Pallava lords, having discovered this strength of his as well as his valour and lineage, said that to ruin him would be no advantage, and so they quickly chose him for a friend. Then entering the (Pallava) king's service, he pleased them by his acts of bravery in battle and obtained the honour of being crowned

with a fillet, offered by the Pallavas with the sprouts (*pallava*) of their own hands. And he also received a territory, bordered by the water of the western ocean which dances with the rising and falling of its arched waves, and bounded by the (?) Prehara, secured to him under the compact that others should not enter it."

This portion, verses 14-21 of the ancestral panegyric, describes the development of feudalism from above in tribal areas where just enough settlements and trade had penetrated to make warfare profitable, particularly guerrilla warfare that could not be countered by regular manoeuvres. Still more interesting are Mayūraśarman's origins, in stanzas 7-13. He was 'of the Kadamba family', the name being derived from a Kadamba tree (that grew near some hermitage) which his ancestors served, and with which they 'had a similar nature (*sādharmya*)'. Young Mayūraśarman left his totem tree to go to the city of the Pallavas (Kāñcī) with his brahmin teacher Vīraśarman, to enter some sort of a foundation (*ghaṭikā*). One day, he had a quarrel with some Pallava cavalry officer, and in a rage took to the sword with the desire to conquer the world. How effectively he wielded the sword has already been described. The totemic origin is certain, for even late Kadamba records (*Ep. Carn.* 7. Sk. 117; 11. Dg. 35) say that the 'ancestor' Kadamba, father of Mayūravarman, sprang up under a Kadamba tree 'from a drop of sweat' that fell on the ground from the forehead of Śiva; this ancestor was three-eyed and four-armed in the brahmin tradition. An alternative given is that Mayūravarman was himself born three-eyed, under the auspicious Kadamba tree. The change of termination from the brahmin — *śarman* to the kṣatriya — *varman* shows normal flexibility of the caste system outside settled villages.

The saga of Mayūraśarman gains in significance[11] from a statement in the *Sahyādri-khaṇḍa* section of the late medieval *Skanda-purāṇa*, which states that he imported brahmins from the north to settle his domains in Goa. The tradition seems genuine, for ordinary brahmin fashion refers the settlement to the mythical Paraśurāma, who created new land (Koṅkaṇ) from the ocean after having annihilated the kṣatriyas no less than twenty-one times. The Kadambas of Goa are known to the 11th century and later, but the Sārasvat brahmins who still

hold the best Goan lands under a peculiar system preserve no memories of any Kadamba ruler, or for that matter any family tradition — apart from mere folklore — older than about 1500. There is some talk of a second (10th century) immigration from the north, say Kanauj. Maṅgeśa, the leading Goa Śarasvat god, is Māṅgiriśa, apparently 'the god of Monghyr' in Bihār ; the original cult-object was a Śiva phallus, fitted (after Madhvācārya's *vaiṣṇava* reform) with the gold mask of the god's face. The villages named in the *Sahyādri-khaṇḍa* exist and may easily be identified.* Remains of the old temples are still to be found where the *Sahyādri-khaṇḍa* places them.

Mayūraśarman's gift of a dense, trackless, mountainous jungle infested by snakes and tigers, was fit only for hardy pioneers. The terrific west-coast monsoon brings on a rapid growth of the forest, which no brahmin settlers could possibly have cleared without a labour supply. The problem was solved in remarkable fashion, by sharing profit between the brahmins to whom the land was given and the actual workers on the land recruited from aboriginal Gāvaḍās (still both caste and tribe), with a few Kuṇabī and other low-caste peasants. The brahmin could do slight manual work, dig a little, hold the plough to amuse himself, or to supplement hired labour. He could not, by caste, perform such labour regularly for sustenance. The brahmin's six duties are studying and teaching the vedas, performing rites for himself and for others, giving and accepting gifts. Of these, the three active duties of teach-

* I myself owned for a while a farm (at Sancoale : *Śaṅkhāvali*) in the dense jungle that had overgrown what had once been the temple dancing-girls' quarters. The thick cluster of dilapidated old wells proves the density of the settlement. The god's processional way, faced with rough-hewn stone blocks, still passes through the plantation. The temple was wrecked by the Portuguese, who built a chapel over the site. Its lotus-pond still survives; very old, gigantic temple-cobras have occasionally crossed the paths of people who are considered very fortunate to have had, and even more to have survived, the encounter. It was possible, as late as 1924, to sit through Christmas-eve night on a platform built on a fruit tree, watching a tigress return to her kill of a buffalo calf near the farm-house; from the chapel side could be heard an impassioned sermon in Koṅkaṇī by the Padre, while from the house came hunting stories in the far-carrying country voice of the aged head of the family, my uncle.

ing the vedas, performing ritual for others, and accepting fees were lost in practice because of the landholder's life, being ultimately performed for the Goa Sārasvats themselves by priests of other brahmin groups such as the Karhāḍās. The loss of function was helped by the Sārasvats' diet of fish and game, eaten regularly without loss of caste. Nevertheless, a tradition of scholarship remained, while the priesthood of the five great temples, with their active worship, was also retained by Sārasvat brahmins because of the very profitable control of temple property involved.

The (brahmin) community as a whole held all the village land. All matters pertaining to the village were decided by the assembly of the community in the presence of all adult males. However, the workers were also present and their wishes consulted, even though they had no formal voice. The real discussion was between the elders (heads of the great undivided households), whose will generally imposed itself upon younger members. Finally, the decision was not by straight voting or clear-cut majority but by the sense of the assembly, so that even a single cantankerous old patriarch could make a nuisance of himself. One such crusty obstacle was neatly excluded from the assembly when induced to say, in jest (when the assembly was specially convened to deal with some trifling point in which he had no interest), " this wooden staff (*kokeṃ*) of mine will represent me " ; the staff continued to represent him very efficiently for the rest of his life, as he could not go back on his word. In such an assembly, family customs, local usage, oracles consulted in times of serious doubt, all played their part.

The country is hilly land near the sea. The main food-producing soil lies at the bottom of the valley, which intensive cultivation over the centuries has reduced to the uniform level of a floor. The original forest has completely disappeared here, the stream of the valley reduced to a thin trickle. To prevent waterlogging, the stream has to be allowed to flow at a rate that keeps the water-table high enough for rice, the only crop on such land. Moreover, salt water from the estuaries cannot be allowed to enter at high tide. This means dykes (particularly for *khāzan* lands reclaimed from the sea)

that must be kept in constant repair; and strong wooden flood-gates of which the smaller swing shut automatically against the tide, opening at the ebb with the pressure of the inner stream-water. The larger flood-gates are operated by one or more paid servants of the community. Up some of the streams, seasonal clay dykes have to be built for water control. The roads had also to be repaired after the rains which average close to 100" in four months. There were other communal expenses, such as the temple, the carpenter, barber, porter, blacksmith and other technicians who served the community as a whole. So, the prime land at the bottom of the valley was held in common, without fixed partition between members of the community. It was separated from the second level by revetted embankments (constructed by paid communal labour) rising from three to ten feet in height. The roads, such as they were, passed along this embankment and the houses were built at that level. Behind the houses rose the hills. The hilltop land was again generally in common, for grazing and firewood. The oldest porterage tracks, still to be traced by head-load rests about a mile apart, and in places by a rut worn inches deep into the harder rock by centuries of unshod footsteps, also passed along the top of the hill, which was easiest to keep clear. The rest of the land was assigned to the joint families for plantations. The working families had their shifting plots for slash-and-burn *kumbher* cultivation of *nācṇī* (*Eleusine Coracana*), also on the sloping hillside. Occasionally, flat patches on the hilltop could be taken on leasehold from the community, covered with a thin layer of laboriously transported soil, and farmed profitably, for the sea yielded salt and fish which were mixed with ashes for fertilizer.

The brahmin householders had varying amounts of hillside land assigned to them which they could clear, terrace, and farm as owners. It is essential to note that these farms meant a substantial amount of commodity production and exchange beyond the commune, from the very first settlement. The main export was coconuts (and byproducts) which, with the salt panned at the seashore, paid for the major imports: cloth, metals, sometimes even grain. While the traditional uses of the coconut undoubtedly go back to the time of the early

plantations, it is difficult to find early documentation in spite of the universal ritual use of the nut today. Let us hear from Ibn Battūta :

"The coco-palm is one of the strangest of trees, and looks exactly like a date-palm. The nut resembles a man's head, for it has marks like eyes and a mouth, and the contents, when it is green, are like the brain. It has fibre like hair, out of which they make ropes, which they use instead of nails to bind their ships together, and also as cables. Amongst its properties are that it strengthens the body, fattens and adds redness to the face. If it is cut open when it is green, it gives a liquid deliciously sweet and fresh. After drinking this, one takes a piece of the rind as a spoon and scoops out the pulp inside the nut. This tastes like an egg that has been boiled but not quite cooked, and is nourishing. I lived on it for a year and a half when I was in the Maldive Islands (*Bat.* 242, with dried fish ; cf. *Beal* 2.252). One of its peculiarities is that oil, milk and honey are extracted from it. The honey is made in this fashion. They cut a stalk on which the fruit grows, leaving two fingers' length, and on this they tie a small bowl, into which the sap drips. If this has been done in the morning, a servant climbs up again in the evening with two bowls, one filled with water. He pours into the other sap that has collected, then washes the stalk, cuts off a small piece, and ties on another bowl. The same thing is repeated next morning until a good deal of the sap has been collected, when it is cooked until it thicknes. It then makes an excellent honey, and the merchants of India, Yemen and China buy it and take it to their own countries, where they manufacture sweetmeat from it. The milk is made by steeping the contents of the nut in water, which takes on the colour and taste of milk and is used along with food. To make the oil, the ripe nuts are peeled and the contents dried in the sun, then cooked in cauldrons and the oil extracted. They use it for lighting and dip bread in it, and the women put it on their hair." (*Bat.* 114-5).

To this classic description must be added a few more products, such as charcoal from the shell, sugar and wine from the sap, some rare silky cloth made from fluffier portions of the husk, (*Var.* 65-6) and the numerous uses of the fronds and the trunk for construction of shelters and houses, fishing boats, outriggers etc.

These landowners bid at triennial auctions for plots in the rice-producing valley land, then worked on a share, or less often wage, agreement with the actual cultivators who provided only the labour, not the tools, seed, planning, supervision, and

transport. The competition was not strong till recently. The profits of the auction were first spent for the communal expenses, dykes, roads and the like. There was often an extra charge, namely a fixed share for each brahmin which might later be reassigned, or divided between his heirs. If the enterprise showed a loss after that, the losses had to be borne by the landowners, according to the shares held in rough proportion to the plantation land assigned. If there were a profit, as happened oftener than not, it was divided between working-class families and shareholders in the proportion of two-thirds for the workers, one-third for the landowners; further subdivision was by the number of shares held by each family. The working-class shares were periodically reassigned by number of labourers in the household. The leases on some land, as for example the *khāzan* reclaimed from sea or estuary, were for nine years or more, because of the heavy capital expenditure involved. Such leases were generally taken from the community by temporary associations of many workers on mutually agreed shares, as with the classical *goṣṭhī*. In all this, local custom made for inevitable variation.

The further developments of these village communes are well worth following. The brahmin settlements were thirty on Goa island (*Tisuary*), sixty-six in Salcete, as the names and tradition both prove. Non-brahmin communities sprang up, naturally upon inferior land that was left, on the same pattern. Shifting kingdoms and gradual development of warfare meant taxes of some sort, for the communes, whether of brahmins or other castes, had no armed force whatever at their command. Even the few serious crimes were punished only by exile or by the king. Because of successive conquests, each of which exacted something more than the previous tribute, the land had to pay gradually increasing amounts of taxes. These were mostly in kind till the 1880's until which time they were farmed out by auction for conversion into the cash which the government needed. The Muslims first raided the land of the communes about 1310 under Malik Kāfūr, had a transient occupation headed by Hassan Gangu Bāhamani which seems to have alternated with Vijayanagar control. Somewhere about this period, garrisons appeared and had to be paid for,

whether effective in defence or not. The real Muslim conquest (consolidating the raid of Mahmūd Gāwān in 1470) was by Yūsuf Adil Shāh in 1482. The Muslims immediately made some of the landholders into feudal military governors over the villages, with title of *Desāī* which has now become a surname. These chosen few had the right and the duty of maintaining, for the first time, armed retainers who would serve the higher feudal lord at need, but whose main purpose was tax collection. Their common brahminism did not prevent immediate oppression by the new *Desāīs* of their own fellow-land-holders. Tradition reports that some would humble a neighbour by forcing him to do menial service or tying him up in the stables. The communes began even to encroach upon each other's territory, and the only known internecine armed conflict between them belongs to these forty years.

In 1510, the Portuguese occupied the island of Tisuary, for it could be held (like Macão, Bombay, Diu) by a naval power that had good ships and gunpowder but not too many men for a permanent garrison. Alfonso d'Albuquerque was aided by the local population against the Muslims, who were driven out in 1511; in reward, the ancient rights were restored and guaranteed to the communes, on condition of paying all taxes that had been imposed, even by the Muslims. To this circumstance is due the survival, at least in form, of the Goan village commune. The Jesuits introduced several new plants from South America. Of these, the cashew is the most valuable as a money crop (the nut), though the phenolic byproducts of the tree (never properly utilized) ruin the underbrush and greatly lower the water-table. The pineapple was never sufficiently developed, while the potato, guava, and custard-apple (*sītā-phala*) grew better outside Goa. At about the same time (1575 A.D.), the same active Society of Jesus introduced systematic mango grafting, which improved the Indian fruit out of all recognition, and created a further source of income for the horticulturist in the whole of India. The Portuguese made numerous special levies. Forced conversions with systematic destruction of temples, practised by the Portuguese from 1583 till the expulsion of the Jesuits, resulted in the flight of many landowners. Those that remained behind to retain family

lands produced a new phenomenon, the "brahmin christians" of Goa. They still receive the *jono* share of the original brahmins, while their women (as of other Christians) still make surreptitious votive offerings to Hindu deities. Commerce and growth of population had long forced some Goan brahmins into trade; some emigrated to become feudal nobles under the Peshwās. The final ruin of the communes was due primarily to the Portuguese law which allowed shares to be alienated without transfer of the land holdings. This meant that the formal voting power of the commune lay with people (who lived as far away as East Africa) interested solely in the maximum profit without consideration of local improvements. The conversion of communal property into bourgeois property left only the decidedly insufficient valley-land untouched for the time being. A major support of Goans was thereafter from imported foodstuffs paid for by the money sent home by their emigrant workers.

9.7. The superb craftsmanship of the Gupta age is seen less in the sculpture and architecture than in the Mehrauli iron pillar of Candra (probably Candragupta II) in front of the Kutb Minār. Wrought by hand, still unrusted* after 1500 years or so of exposure to the deleterious climate, it would be an impressive monument in any land and period of history. The development of the working class remains to be traced. The decay of guilds, as compared to their position till the 2nd century A.D., has already been mentioned. The famous Mandasor inscription (Fleet 18) describes the activities of a guild that wove silks and fine cloth for the luxury trade. The guild-weavers, originally from Lāṭa (Gujarāt) were rich enough in A.D. 473-4 (dated in the Mālava-gaṇa, not the Gupta era) not only to repair the temple of the Sun-god that they had built and endowed 36 years earlier, but to commemorate the event by an elaborate Sanskrit panegyric, by one Vatsabhaṭṭi. Vatsabhaṭṭi's court-poet style and palpable imitation of two known Kālidāsa stanzas incidentally gives the only clue to the date of Kālidāsa. Members of the guild (*śreṇī*) are described as accomplished in war, and all the cultured arts,

* An iron pillar at Dhar (*JRAS* 1898, 143-4) had gone to pieces by 1898; it may have dated from the 11th century.

science, religion, astrology, not to speak of their superb cloth, also described. Fleet 16 shows an oil-pressers' guild, headed by one Jīvanta, which received a deposit for perpetual endowment (of oil for a lamp) in another temple of the Sun, even should the guild move away. This seems to be the only guild in contemporary inscriptions that produced anything for the common people. The *śreṇis* in general faded away, to be replaced by another type of association at need, namely the *goṣṭhī*, (e.g. *EI*. 27.32; 643 A.D.), which was for restricted periods and special purposes, without the bond of caste or kinship. Thus the Vasantgaḍh plate (*EI*. 9.187-192) of the time of king Varmalāta (625 A.D.; his prime minister was grandfather of the poet Māgha) describes the building of a temple to Durgā under the local name Kṣemāryā by a *goṣṭhī*, about 40 of whose members have signed the epigraph. Their names show that the members were not united by kinship. One of them, Boṭaka, emphatically designates himself *pratihāra*, which later described the kings of Kanauj, but here means the still extant Rājasthānī Paḍiār caste. The last signatory is the *gaṇikā* (temple dancing girl, and therefore prostitute) Būṭā. The *goṣṭhī* tradition gained in popularity, so that the 12th century *rāṇaka* (peer of the realm) Śūlapāṇi is described as head of the stone-carvers' *goṣṭhī*, to which he could certainly not have been ascribed by caste; he carved (presumably as amateur artist) the Deopārā (Bengal) *praśasti* of Vijayasena (*EI*. 1.305-15).

This inevitable concomitant of a falling density of commodity production left unsolved the fundamental technical problems of the village. The main labour supply, that of cultivators, was assured. The very origin of the *kuṇabī* cultivators from tribesmen, and their formation into new caste-groups prevented the mastery of finer technique. Very few could, because of caste, skin cattle, tan the hides, or work in leather, all low occupations. Some tribal people might become basket-makers, without learning how to weave cloth or spin yarn. On the other hand, not every village could support a whole guild of blacksmiths, leather-workers, or basket-weavers. The problem of indispensable techniques was critical, and unless solved,

meant either collapse of the village or change to commodity production.

The most essential village craftsmen do not include the weaver or tailor, as the demand for clothing was low because of the climate and style of dress, while cotton was not universally grown. The first among the necessary workmen was the village carpenter; correspondingly we find mention of a special carpenter's plot (outside the common village cultivation and pasture) in the Gupta period. Dharasena II of Valabhī (near Bhāvnagar) in 571-2 A.D. mentions such a plot (*vardhaki-pratyaya*) in granting small fields to a brahmin (Fleet 38). The Gunaighar plates (*IHQ*. 6.45-60) of Vainyagupta in 506 A.D. show the same type of plot (*Viṣṇu-vardhaki-kṣetraś ca*) at the other end of Gupta territory, whence its universality may be deduced. These special artisans were assigned small plots of their own to cultivate. This would not suffice as inducement for plying the craft, so emoluments and perquisites were added that persist in various forms to the present day in out-of-the-way villages (*BJ*. 3.448-9; *NDG*. 74-80). The whole group of specialists are known as the *alutedār-balutedār* [12] in Mahārāṣṭra. The carpenter, for example, received about 2% of each peasant's yield, plus one to eight pounds of grain 'for seed'; against this, he kept the houses, farm implements — the plough being all of wood except the iron share — and well-frames in repair. For new constructions, he received additional fees. The blacksmith's share was about 1.75%, one to three pounds 'seed'; he kept the iron portion of the implements in order; for new shares, sickles, knives, he had to be given the metal and extra payment. Both blacksmith and carpenter would ask for an assistant for the drudge work, such as operating the bellows, carrying the heavy logs, &c. The village potter had a pound or two for seed from each peasant, with 1.25% of the grain; he supplied the normal earthen pots used for water, rituals, cooking, but charged extra for special large vessels, say those needed for storing grain. The barber had lesser perquisites for a normal three tonsures monthly per male head; the villager has no fancy hairdressing of the type seen in Gupta sculptures, but still contents himself with a shaven pate with or without some distinguishing hair-crest. The washerman, the

leather-workers, and the like had similar functions and rewards, with payment in grain, sometimes in small amounts of labour on the special plots. In spite of different castes, these craftsmen formed a peculiarly united group with the collective designation nāru-kāru; they did each other's work without cavil, or special payments, always stood by each other. Naturally, every one of these artisans had some special functions at celebrations, weddings, service of the gods, with minor perquisites. The increasingly generous medieval grants exempted them explicitly (e.g. *EI.* 5.112) from the donation to the brahmins, which meant that these *grāma-kāravaḥ* would pay nothing to the new donee, while continuing to receive their perquisites as before. Thus was settled the basic question that caste and class had failed to settle. The village priest included in the list was often not a brahmin, though the astrologer was. The clerk-accountant, like the goldsmith-money-changer, who decided the rates of exchange between various coinages before British standardization, might not be present in every village, though listed among these (traditionally twelve) village servants. The functions of village porter and guard could be shared by the *Camār* leather-workers, or the *Mahār* who had to keep the village clean. Growth of a particular family caused difficulties adjusted differently by each particular village, sometimes by emigration, at others by assignment of additional plots that would add enough to the income to support the new members of the craftsman's family.

Only with the bourgeois economy did this system break up as the workers found ways of earning cash incomes while shirking their village duties without surrender of the shares. Nevertheless, the shareholding artisans and their prerogatives survive in villages where transport of commodities is still poor. For example : the ample supply of discarded tins and the shrunken local market have driven surviving potters out of most villages near the Bombay-Poona road to market centers like Poona and Talegāo. Beḍsā-Karanj village, at the head of the Paunā valley, does not support a full-time potter, and is too difficult of access from the road for easy transport of household earthenware pottery. So a potter from a neighbouring village receives a *balutem* of about six pounds of grain an-

nually from each Beḍsā household, to supply them, free of any further charge, the normal cooking pots, water jars, and festival pottery, of which the most important is the little vessel for *makara-saṃkrānti* (now January 13-14) whose manufacture keeps all potters exclusively busy for a couple of months in advance. On the other hand, the Beḍsā-Karanj goldsmith family was forced to emigrate to parts unknown, abandoning the ancestral crematory stele and perquisite land. The village must have contributed to the maintenance of the monks in the nearby caves completed about 2000 years ago, abandoned for well over a millennium, but still called by the correct name *vihāra* by the villagers instead of the common Marāṭhī *leṇīṃ*. However, there is no trace of any food-producing land held in common. The hamlet became feudal *inām* to some brahmin under the Peshwās, but the holder's family seems never to have settled in the village, nor to have manorial holdings on the land; the present incumbent lives in Hyderabad territory, but draws the fixed sum directly from a benign government which, as with the British, protects all property rights.

Analysis of the *Amarakośa*[14] a Sanskrit dictionary reasonably assigned to the Gupta age, shows that the system had developed even at that time as the village carpenter is specially distinguished from the free carpenter; civic guilds (2.8.18) were "an essential constituent of the realm". City craftsmen and workmen are treated in a separate section. The 'class of śūdras' (2.10) deals quite unmistakably with the workmen in a village, who formed a descending hierarchy down to untouchables, and tribesmen beyond the limits of village society. Purveyors of game have today been replaced by tribal hunters like the Pārdhīs, and butchers by the Mohammedan or Christian butcher respectively. The wine-distiller and vendor of the Amarakośa found no regular place in the later Indian village, where the practice was frowned upon, the product more and more heavily taxed as a feudal and then British government monopoly. That almost all the remaining workmen still have their counterparts in the villages shows the 'unchanging village'. The most important śūdras now missing are a class of unfree drudge-workmen who come just after the numerous paid labourers who were not craftsmen. Just how they functioned

is not clear, but that they had mostly come into existence because of unpaid debts incurred in times of famine, or were decayed tribesmen, is fairly obvious. Moneylending was a regular vaiśya profession (2.9.3-5), like husbandry and trade. There is no word in the collection for serf, nor for landlord, land-owner, nor village shopkeeper.

Notes & References :

1. For the general matter of this chapter, Fleet, *DHI*, *Har.* contain ample information. The *Har.* translation by E. B. Cowell and F. W. Thomas (London 1897) helps, as does the Hindi translation by S. Chaudhuri, 2 vol., Kaṭhautiā, Bihār; 1950, 1948). The Hindi essay on the *Harṣacarita* by V. S. Agrawāla (Patna, 1953) gives valuable collation with archaeological data from sculptures, but suffers by taking the *Śukranīti* as descriptive of the Gupta administration. That work mentions gunpowder (including the formula) and firearms five separate times, hence belongs to the late Muslim period, as its editor and translator B. K. Sarkar (Allahabad, 1925) has shown. "The king should promptly realise the land revenues, wages, duties, interests, bribes, and rents without delay. The king should give to each cultivator the deed of rent (assessment), having his own seal. Having determined the land revenue of the village, the king should receive it from one rich man in advance, or a guarantee (for the payment) of that either by monthly or periodical instalments. Or the king should appoint officers called *grāmapā* by paying 1/16, 1/12, 1/8, 1/6 of his own receipts......He should realise 1/32 portion of the (capital) increase or interest of the usurer....He should receive rents from houses and dwellings as from cultivated lands. He should also have land tax from shopkeepers. For the preservation and repair of the roads, he should collect tolls from those who use the roads" (*Śukranīti*, Sarkar's translation; 4.2.245-258). The formula for gunpowder is given in 4.7.400-406; muskets and cannon in 4.7.389-94, ramrod 4.7.418-21, firearms for the royal bodyguard 4.7.47-53. Lawyers and their fees (1/16 to 1/160 of the value defended or realised) appear in 4.5.224-31. The document therefore belongs to the period of developed feudalism from below, when taxfarmers, tolls, house taxes, &c., were fully proliferated. R. N. Saletore's *Life in the Gupta age* (Bombay 1943) is an uncritical compendium which might be used for reference with due caution. My paper in note 1 of the last chapter gives details of the tribes, and land-grants, including a discussion of Chinese pilgrims' accounts.

2. V. S. Sukṭhaṇkar's paper on the home of the 'so-called' Andhra kings (*ABORI*. 1.21-42; Memorial ed. vol. 2. 251-265) gives this inscription as an appendix; I have modified the translation slightly. The inscription was also published by the same author in *EI*. 14.153-5 (Memorial ed. 2.213-5).

3. A Sabaean inscription found 'somewhere in Gujarāt or Kaṭhiāwār' (whereof a photocopy reached me in 1942 as "cuneiform") was

identified by Dr. A. F. L. Beeston of the Bodleian Libraby, Oxford (letter of August 20, 1951). It duplicates another near Aden published in *Corpus Inscr. Sem.* 27, 1905, 153-5 : "The landed estate of Abhirata' of Harrān and his fellow tribesmen of the hill of Harrān, who are of the tribe Yath'ir, clans Rabib and Khait, extends from this inscription northwards, while the buildings and the ravine of the mountain bound it on the east." The palaeography may be about the beginning of the Christian era. Shorter Sabaean epigraphs have been found at Bhūj (*EI.* 19.300-302 Sun-worshippers, presumably imported during Kuṣāṇa rule for settlement on the Chenāb river, turned into Maga brahmins, with their own *Sāmba-purāṇa* (cf. R. C. Hazra, *ABORI.* 36.1955.62-84). The line of foreign governors at Junāgaḍh (Girnār) is striking, though their sons often bear Indian names. Soon after Skandagupta, the Maitraka dynasty of Valabhi was founded by one Bhaṭārka with his tribe or clan to support him; the names of both chieftain and his tribe are Sanskritized and probably foreign. Mālāda (son of Bandhumatī and brother of Nirmalā) who endowed the Buddhist monastic university at Nālanda under Bālāditya, says (*EI.* 20.37-46) that one Tikina, 'lord of the north, minister, and lord of the passes' under Yaśovarman was his father. The king may be Yaśovarman of Kanauj, not Yaśodharman of Malwa over a century earlier as the editor wants it. It is admitted that *tikina* = *tegin* is a Turki title meaning chief, noble, or prince. The Hūṇas that had to be defeated more than once by the Guptas, whose empire they shook to its foundations, were absorbed without trace, though Sanskrit poetry preserves the memory of the highly admired pale golden complexion of Hun and Śaka women — fitting addition to the golden age. Even with the Muslims and the British, trade preceded military activity, which was undertaken only when it promised more gain at relatively low cost.

4. Harṣa's camp, and the army on the march are described vividly by Bāṇa, in *Har.* The court-poet seems never to have visited the original capital Thanesar. nor for that matter Kanauj. He describes the former region as supplied with wild coconut trees, though the tree does not grow much further north than the poet's home, which was near the south bank of the Ganges, above Patna. He must have taken it for granted as a symbol of any fertile land.

5. Here, the *bharatavākya* of the *Mudrārākṣasa* and the fragmentary references from the lost drama *Devī-candragupta* may be taken as possible exceptions.

6. Perhaps the most striking such genealogies are of the Nalas (*DKA.* 52), who were more likely to have been *niṣāda* forest savages than the handy *niṣadhas* into which they were turned, in order to make Nala's father their ancestor. The Pāṇḍuvaṃśī kings (Fleet 81) are almost certainly of the same line as the tribal Pandos found in the central Indian wilderness to this day (*Census* of India, 1931, pt. 3). The Pā!as began their glorious, highly cultured dynasty wtih the illegitimate offspring of a Nāga, according to Tāranātha. The Bhaumas are simply " autochthonous."

7. For the Licchavis, Sylvain Levi, *Le Népal, étude historique d'un royaume Hindou* (Paris 1905-8, 3 vol., 2-3 in the *Annales* du Musée Guimet); particularly 2.89-90, 3.64 (first Licchavi inscription, in the late 6th or early seventh century) 3.79, &c.; Mallas, 3.69, 2.212, &c. Even in the 7th century A.D., the Tibetan king Srong-tsan Gam-po also claimed Licchavi origin. Fantastic theories that the Buddha was 'a sturdy Tibetan' were consequently formed by Vincent Smith and others out of whole cloth.

8. For epigraphic records of the *hiranyagarbha* rebirth ceremony see D. C. Sircar, *Successors of the Sātavāhanas*. The rites are described in *Matsya-purāṇa* 275 (1-23). The *tulāpuruṣa* which precedes it became much commoner. The royal personage was weighed against gold or silver, which was then distributed to brahmins. Such gifts had not the advantage of rebirth with a new caste.

9. R. E. Enthoven: *Tribes and castes of Bombay* (3 vol., 1920), *sub* Gāvaḍā 1.362; also a *devak* (sept) of the Gābits, 1.349, and some others.

10. G. M. Moraes: *The Kadamba-kula* (Bombay 1931); also *Trans. Vth Ind. Hist. Con.* 1941.164-74; *Festschrift* R. K. Mukerjee (*Bhārata kaumudī*, Allahabad 1945) 441-475. D. C. Sircar: *Successors of the Sātavāhanas*, 225-254.

11. Archaeological Survey, Mysore State; *Annual Report* 1929, p. 50. The inscription, brief as it is, is still not clear, except that the author raided extensively.

12. For the village settlement in Goa, see my paper: *The village community in the 'Old Conquests' of Goa* (J. Uni. Bombay, 15, 1947, 63-78). Of great use were G. Gerson da Cunha's edition of the *Sahyādri-khaṇḍa* (Bombay 1877), and his study on *The Koṅkaṇi language and literature* (Bombay 1881). However, the main field work was my own, as I was born in Goa, and talked with enough of the older people to be able to restore the older system from its strong remnants. The documentation comes from Filippe Néry Xavier's (Portuguese) *Bosquejo historico das comunidades das aldeas dos concelhos Ilhas, Salcete e Bardez* (2nd ed. Bastora, 3 vol. 1903-07); the same author's *Gabineto literario das fontainhas* was not available.

13. For these village craftsmen see Molesworth's *Marāṭhī-English* dictionary. T. N. Atre's *Gāṃva-gāḍā* (in Marāṭhī, Karjat-Amaḷner, 1915) gives the details of the system from the querulous point of view of the new bourgeoisie, for whom it had long outlived its usefulness.

14. This is done in my note: *The working class in the Amarakośa* (*JOR.* 24, 1955, 57-69); the hierarchical principle in the first two sections of the *kośa* has apparently escaped notice. The words *tunna-vāya* and *saucika* mean some sort of needle-worker in 2.10.6. The meaning now accepted is "tailor", but embroiderers would be likelier in view of Hiuen Tsang's comment that cut and stitched clothes were not in fashion over most of the country.

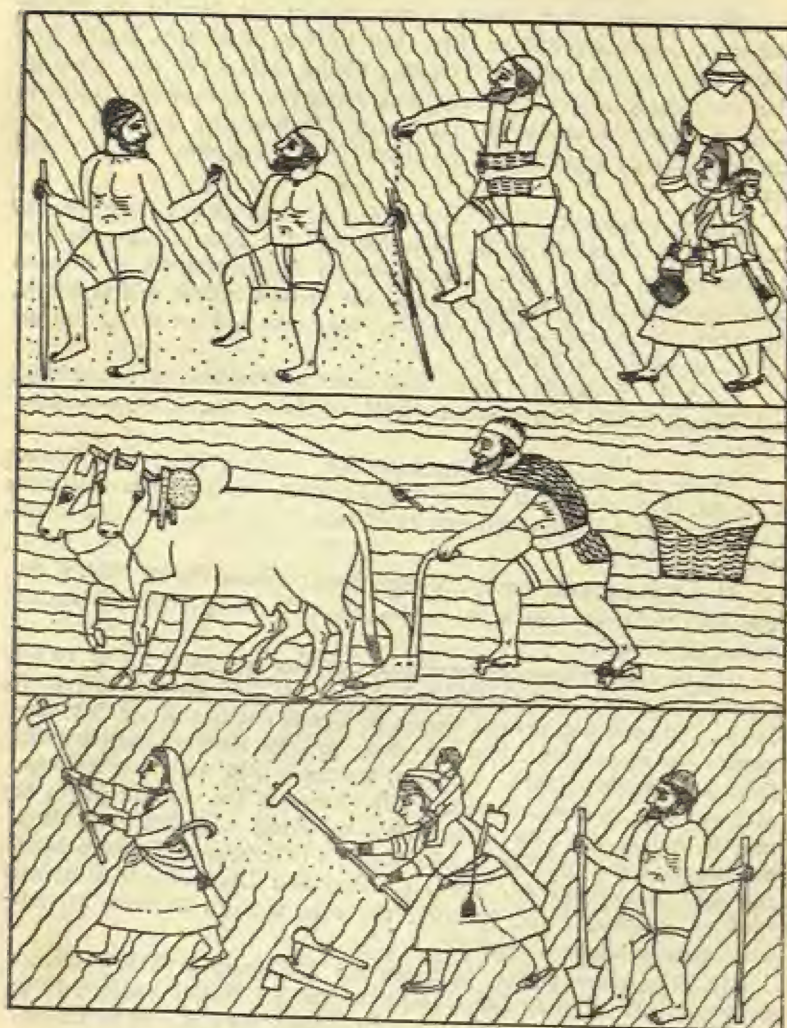


Fig. 40. Dry-field cultivation. The cultivators are called 'zamindārs' in the text, which is rather incorrect Persian, and depicts late feudal production in Kaśmir. Note that in the top panel, the sowing is by hand, and the seeds trampled into the earth by the cultivators.

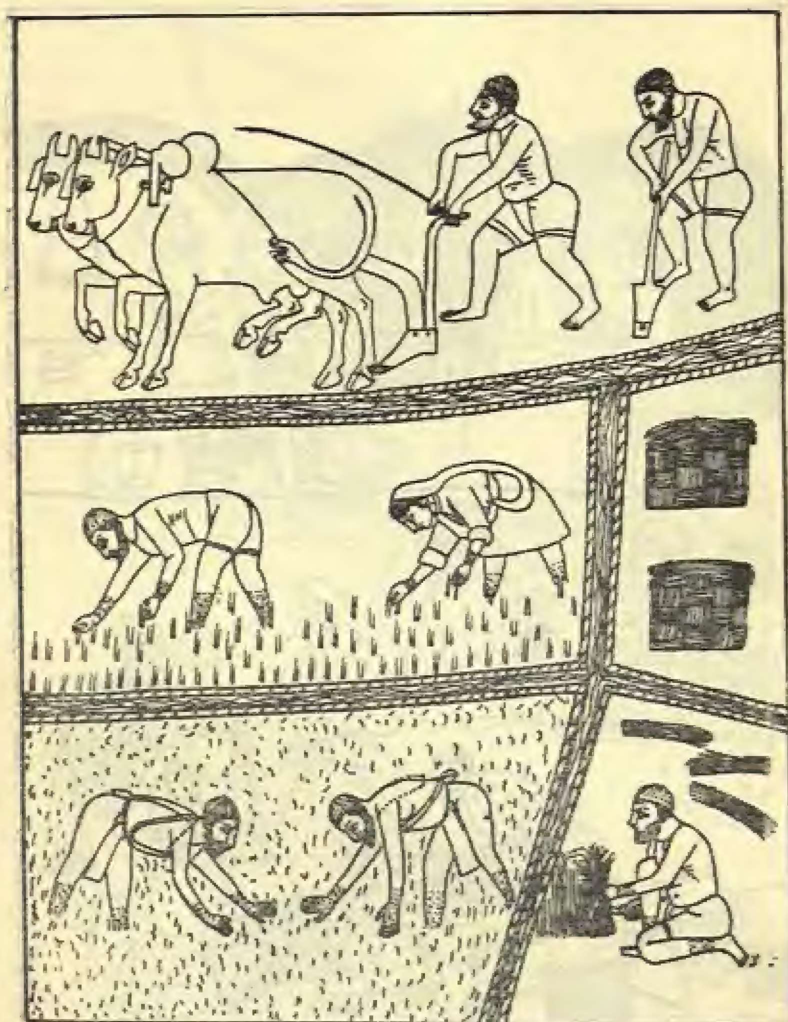


Fig. 41. Wet-field (paddy-rice) cultivation; ploughing, irrigation, (or drainage) canals, seed-plots and transplantation shown. The method is still used all over the country for planting rice. The vacated seed-plots are usually sown with legumes, which gives a natural rotation of crops.



Fig. 42. Threshing, watched by the landlord's agent. Sale of the landlord's share to grain dealers; transport by horse caravan. The grain, therefore becomes a commodity.

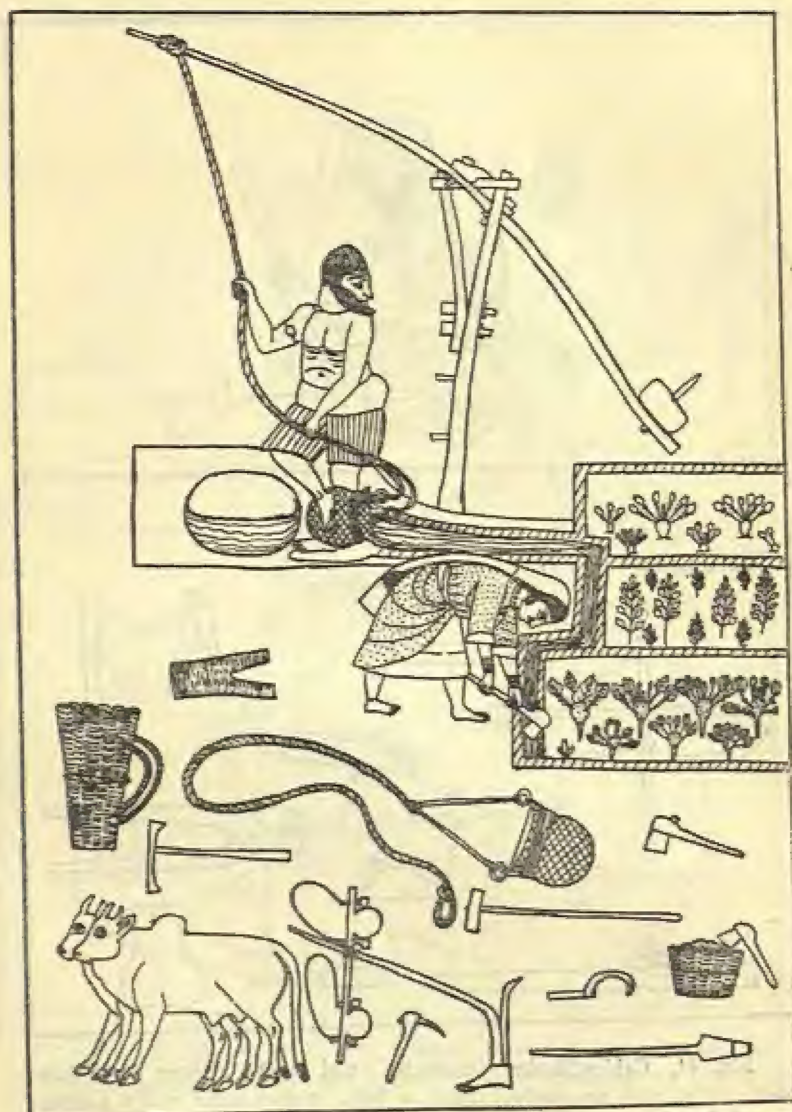


Fig. 43. Kitchen-gardening, and tools; the woman hoes the plot watered by the man from a pit well with a counterbalanced bucket (*shadduf*). The particular crop seems to be turnips.

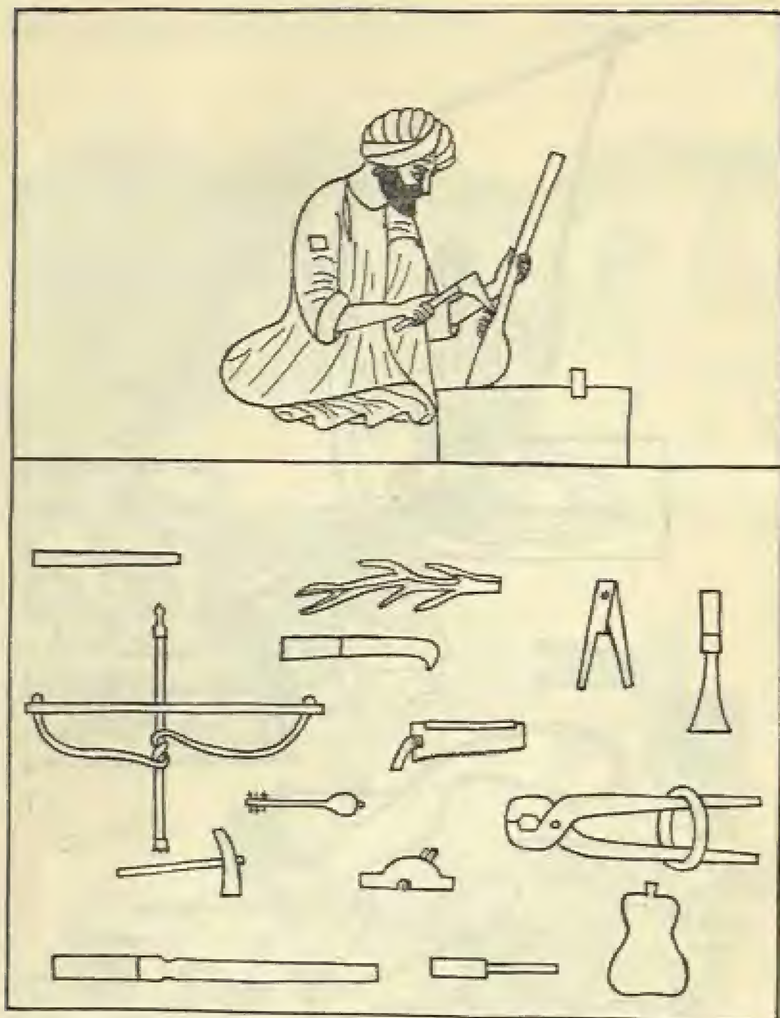


Fig. 44. Cabinet-maker (carpenter) and tools. Figures 40-47 have been traced (by permission) from a MS. in the India Office Library, commissioned for William Moorecroft about 1820, in Kaśmir. The village carpenter would use somewhat less delicate tools.

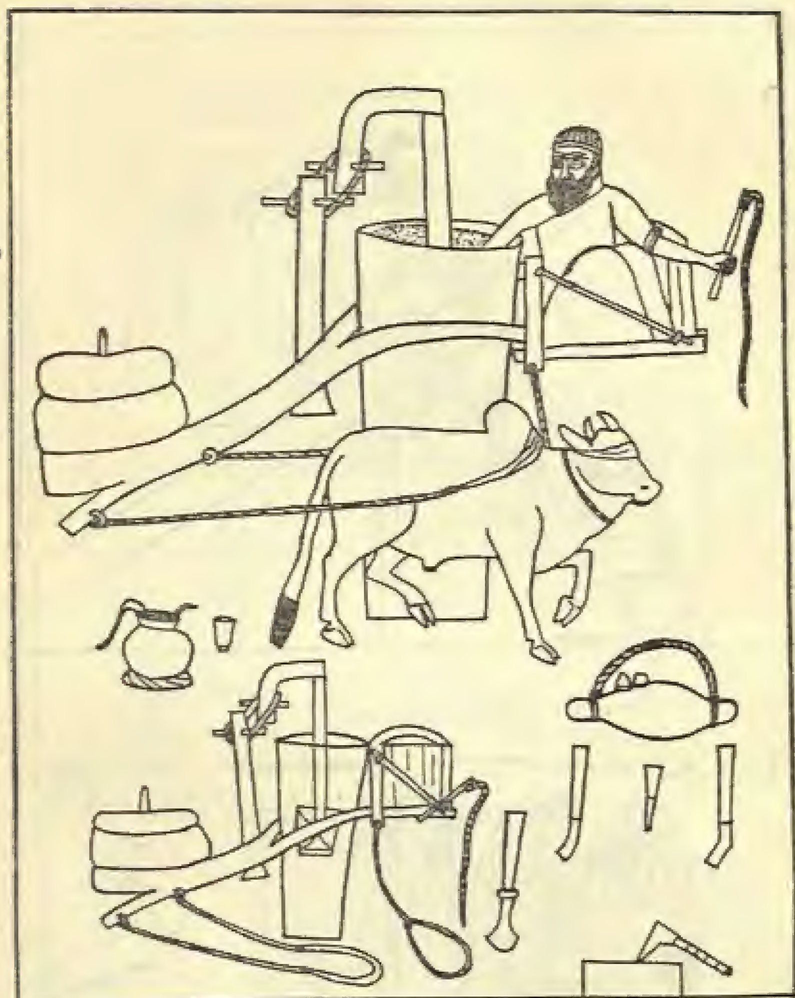


Fig. 45. Village oil-press. The artisans differ by very little through all known periods of village settlement. In other parts of the country, the differences in technique would be negligible.

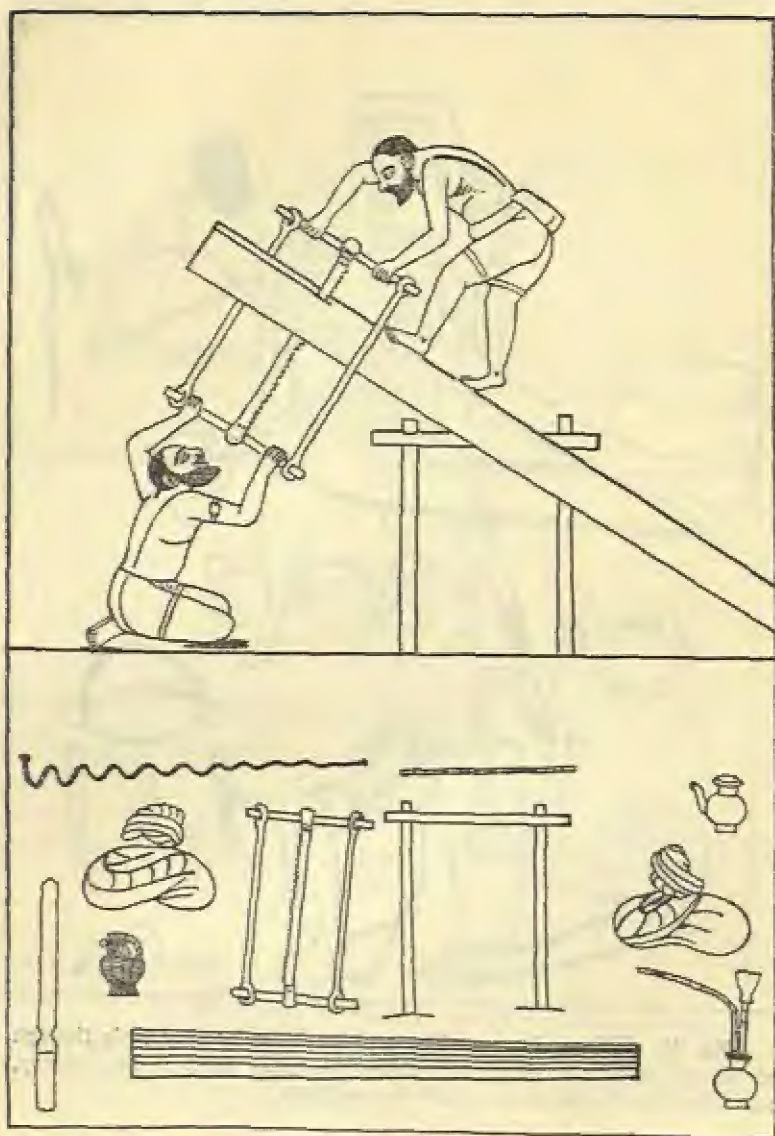


Fig. 46. Sawyers. Though the scene is in Kaśmīr, craftsmen elsewhere in the country would differ at most in hairdressing and clothing.

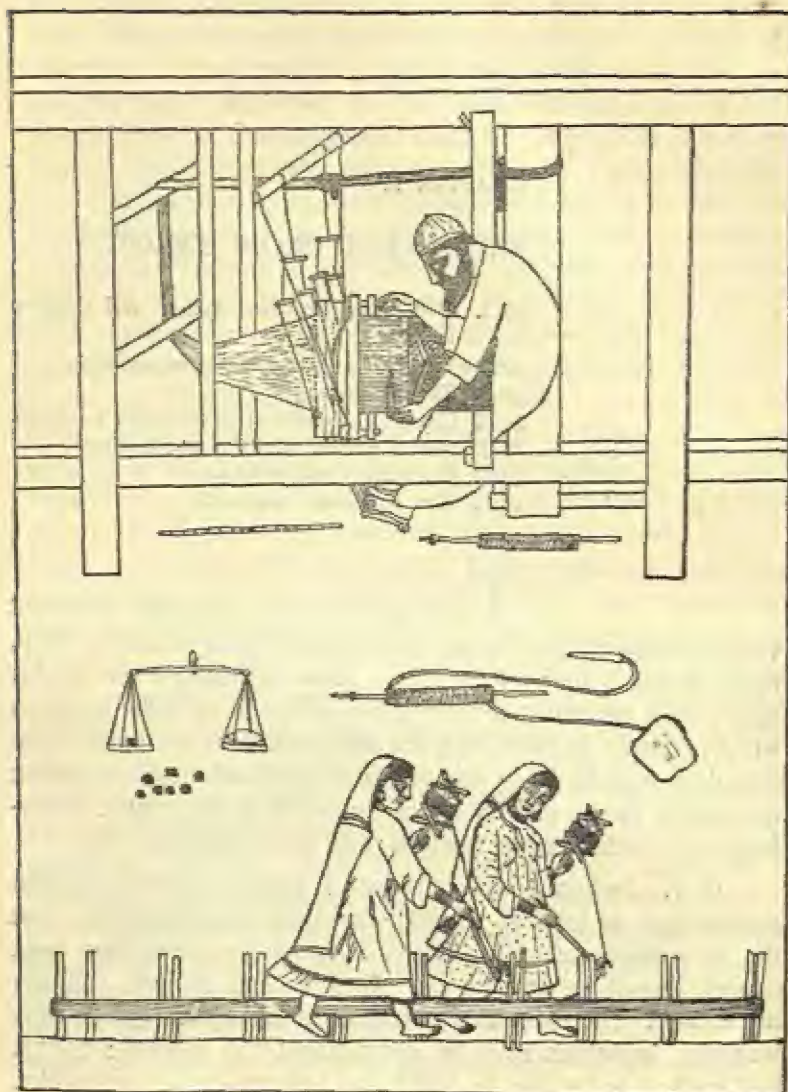


Fig. 47. The weaver. This is not one of the essential village craftsmen, but implies commodity production and trade, even under feudalism.

CHAPTER X

FEUDALISM FROM BELOW

10.1. Difference between Indian and English feudalism.
10.2. The role of trade in feudal society.
10.3. The Muslims.
10.4. Change to feudalism from below ; slavery.
10.5. Feudal prince, landlord, and peasant.
10.6. Degeneracy and collapse.
10.7. The bourgeois conquest.

THIS period has increasingly better but varied documentation in many languages which would, by itself, make detailed analysis difficult. These difficulties are further aggravated by many diverse local survivals of older customs which, at least in form, distract attention from the basis. The complete pattern is so intricate and confused that its tracing necessarily passes some of the confusion on to the reader. Therefore, only certain main features will be considered.

10.1. Indian feudalism differs so much from its European counterpart, at least as regards superficial manifestations, that the very existence of feudalism in India has sometimes been denied, except to describe the Muslim and Rājpūt military hierarchies. The main characteristics of European (specifically English) feudalism may be summarized[1] as follows : 1) "A low level of technique, in which the instruments of production are simple and generally inexpensive, and the act of production is largely individual in character ; the division of labour .... being at a very primitive level of development." This is true of India at all stages, including the pre-feudal. 2) " Production for the immediate need of a household or a village-community,

and not for a wider market." In a broad sense, this is also true here, though increasing commodity production in metals, salt, coconuts, cotton, *tāmbūla* (*pān, Piper betle*), areca nuts, and the like has to be noted. 3) "Demesne-farming ; on the lord's estate, often on a considerable scale, by compulsory labour service." This is decidedly not true of India. The manorial system had begun to come into existence only towards the end of the feudal period, in India. The reason was that the Mauryan empire had nothing to correspond to the villas and slave economy of classical Rome. The unit of settlement was the village. It has been shown that its expansion into tribal areas took place in general by far more peaceful methods than under Rome, or Charlemagne, or feudal barons. Nevertheless, the later Indian feudal lords tried always to cultivate some lands directly so as to be independent of the villagers, whose united resistance or failure to produce a crop in bad years might bring disaster to the lord. The armed retainers of the baron had to be assured an independent food supply for emergencies. These seigneurial lands were often cultivated by slaves. Slavery now took on a new importance, though still not indispensable to the means of production. 4) "Political decentralization" is common to both India and Europe, beginning in the period of feudalism from above. The Mauryan theory that all land belongs to the king was reinforced by the tribal concept of land as territory (not property) held in common by the tribe, whose symbol and expression was the chief ; this chief would be replaced by the king (*Arth.* 11.1), or turn into a king, or be converted into a feudal tributary by a conqueror who might at need support the chieftain against his former tribesmen. In time, the functions of the village councils were more and more usurped by the nearest feudal lord. The exception was of villages paying taxes directly to the king. For them, and for their individual land-owners, some separate form of ownership or tenure-rights were recognized. 5) "Conditional holding of land by lords on some kind of service-tenure." This is particularly noticeable among Rājpūts, whose chief profession was of arms ; and among the earlier Muslims, whose chiefs were invaders and who used the common religion to keep themselves, converts included, apart from the rest of the population. The

Gaṅgas seem to have been the first to develop it in the south (Amma I, 10th century). Later, all lords were required to serve but their *jāgīrs* shifted from time to time. It is important to note that the military hierarchy at the center was not hereditary in general. The emperor would be sole heir to the court-noble whose children might be reduced to penury at the will of the autocrat. The high courtiers might even be slaves. 6) "Possession by a lord of judicial or quasi-judicial functions in relation to the dependent population." This came in part by the lord's sole possession of armed force over the disarmed village, in part from displacement of the older village council. One might trace this back to the *Manusmṛti* princeling who dispensed justice directly as *rājā*, or to Mauryan absolutism in the extensive *sītā* crown lands. Both of these contributed to the development of later feudalism, inevitable as long as the village had no armed force of its own. Three notable characteristics further distinguish Indian from European feudalism: the increase of slavery, absence of guilds, and the lack of an organized church. Caste replaced both guild and church, being symptom and cause of a more primitive form of production.

The failure of indigenous feudalism 'from above' to develop new techniques is a basic contrast with the medieval European achievement, such as the windmill, horse-collars, heavy plough. That some of these inventions are certainly Chinese (e.g. the horse-harness, stern-post rudder, drawloom, &c; *cf.* J. Needham in *Centaurus* 3 (1953). 1-2. p. 46-7) does not detract from the initiative shown by feudal Europe in their adoption, which had been neglected by classical society. The words of Marco Polo[2] illustrate the point:

"You must know that in all this kingdom of Malabar there is never a Tailor to cut a coat or stitch it, seeing that everybody goes naked at all time of the year ... ! For decency only so they wear a scrap of cloth; and so 'tis with men and women, with rich and poor, aye, and with the King (Sundara-Pāṇḍya) himself ... It is a fact that the King goes as bare as the rest, only around his loins he has a piece of fine cloth, and round his neck he has a necklace entirely of precious stones, — rubies, sapphires, emeralds and the like, insomuch that this collar is of great value ... What this King wears, between gold and gems and pearls, is worth more

than a city's ransom .. Here are no horses bred; and thus a great part of the wealth of the country is wasted in purchasing horses... The merchants of Kish, and Ormuz, Dhafar and Sohar and Aden collect great number of chargers and other horses, and these they bring to the territories of this King and of the four brothers ..' For a horse will fetch among them 500 *saggi* of gold, worth more than 100 marks of silver, and vast numbers are sold there every year. Indeed, this king wants to buy more than 2000 horses every year, and so do his four brothers who are kings likewise. The reason why they want so many horses every year is that by the end of the year there shall not be one hundred of them remaining, for they all die off. And this arises from mismanagement, for these people do not know in the least how to treat a horse; and besides they have no farriers. The horse-merchants not only never bring any farriers with them but prevent any farrier from going thither lest that should in any degree baulk the sale of horses, which brings them in every year such vast gains. They bring the horses by sea aboard ships .. And another strange thing to be told is that there is no possibility of breeding horses in this country, as hath often been proved by trial. For even when a great blood-mare has been covered by a great blood-horse, the product is nothing but a wretched wry-legged weed, not fit to ride ... The people of the country go to battle all naked, with only a lance and a shield; and they are the most wretched soldiers. They will kill neither beast nor bird, nor anything that hath life; and for such animal food as they eat, they make the Saracens, or others who are not of their own religion, play the butcher ... These corsairs have a covenant with the King (of Ṭhāṇa) that he shall get all the horses they capture, and all other plunder shall remain with them. The King (of Ṭhāṇa) does this because he has no horses of his own, whilst many are shipped from abroad towards India; for no ship ever goes thither without horses in addition to other cargo ... The number of horses exported from (the Arab cities of the Red Sea) to India yearly is something astonishing. One reason is that no horses are bred there, and another that they die as soon as they get there, through ignorant handling; for the people there do not know how to take care of them, and they feed their horses with cooked victuals and all sorts of trash, as I have told you fully heretofore; and besides all this, they have no farriers." (The last two sentences are not found in any source quoted by Benedetto, p. 215).

Farriers in the Indian society of the day would have meant a new caste. Clothes were not really necessary in that climate, but surely jewels were far less necessary. The painful shortage of metal persists even now in the more isolated villages where every scrap of any metal is carefully preserved till it can be

put to some use. Expert blacksmiths and metallurgists, impossible in caste-ridden villages, would have produced superior arms and armour. However, the contempt for human life, especially of the lower castes who were obviously being punished for sins in a former birth, made it unnecessary to protect the ordinary foot-soldier. It was not lack of technique but of purchasing power that kept the people unclothed, unshod, unhoused.

"In this kingdom (Āndhra) are made the best and most delicate buckrams, and those of highest price; in sooth they look like tissues of spider's web... (Malabar) manufactures very delicate and beautiful buckrams... There is a great export (from Thāṇā) of leather of various kinds, and also of good buckram and cotton... A quantity of cotton is exported (from Cambay) to many quarters; and there is a great trade in hides, which are very well dressed; with many other kinds of merchandise too tedious to mention... So many (skins of all kinds) are dressed (in Guzerat) every year as to load a number of ships for Arabia and other quarters. They also work here beautiful mats in red and blue leather... skilfully embroidered with gold and silver wire... some of these mats are worth ten marks."

Thus reported the Venetian in his third book; without exaggeration, for parts of Āndhra still produce extraordinarily fine cloth of cotton spun and woven by hand.

Good horses may be bred even in the Indian climate, but not if fed on boiled rice mixed with meat. Says the *Arthaśāstra* (2.30) in an age and place that was decidedly better as to horses than the Pāṇḍyan kingdom:

"For the best horse (feed), two droṇas (measure) of any one of the grains, rice, barley, panic seeds soaked or cooked, cooked *mudga* (Phaseolus mungo), or *māṣa* (Phaseolus Radiatus) beans; one *prastha* (measure) of oil, 5 *palas* (weight) of salt, 50 *palas* of flesh, one *āḍhaka* of broth, or two *āḍhakas of* milk-curds, five *palas* of sugar mixed with one *prastha* of beer (*surā*), wine, or two *prasthas* of milk."

Marco Polo's observations were exact, and show that the king must have been advised by learned brahmins versed in the *Arthaśāstra*. Sundara-Pāṇḍya's learned theologians might have been able to explain to him the subtle difference between the systems of Śaṃkara and Rāmānuja; the priest could have performed the ancient vedic horse-sacrifice for him accurately in

all detail. What he could not do was to produce decent horses, or for that matter any other livestock. Northern cattle, not being bred for the special conditions, tended to degenerate just like the imported horses. The cow was sacred enough to worship, but feeding it properly and selecting the calves was left to people who themselves had barely enough to eat, and no interest in better cattle. It has not even now been fully realised that supposedly degenerate sheep, cattle, horses can, by careful selection, crossing, and a proper diet, produce new breeds that serves local purposes better than imported stock.

It was inevitable that the fine horses of Arabia would ultimately reach India ridden by men who had no caste, who did not let their social position hinder personal care of steeds whose pedigrees were often far longer than their own. Equipped (*DB.* 119) with cuirass, chain mail, swords of better steel than any in India, and bows that outshot anything carried by Indian cavalry, these new invaders (Arabs, Turki, Mongol, or heterogeneous Muslims) steadily penetrated deeper into the country. Undefended Madurā was sacked on April 14, 1311 by Malik Kāfūr, the commander-in-chief of Alā' uddīn Khalji, who had been invited by another Sundara-Pāṇḍya during a civil war between brothers (which had been noted by Marco Polo). The spiritual descendants of the Aryans who had first brought the horse into Indian warfare refused to learn the lesson from their own past. The sensible portions of the *Arthaśāstra*, along with its war-engines, had been completely forgotten ; even the long bow, with its irresistible shot, seems to have degenerated with local exceptions (*DB.* 181). Yet Indian feudalism was as dependent upon arms and the horse as European. It was far easier to keep the villagers defenceless than to control them should they learn how to defend themselves.

Most important is the testimony of the Venetian traveller that confirms the incredible, new feudal accumulation and the growth of a new class, feudal landholding barons of a peculiar type. In the inscriptions, these are the Rāṣṭrakūṭas and the like, mentioned from the 10th century onwards in the south (*EI.* 5. 118-141 ; 27.41-7 ; 3.221-4, &c.). Marco Polo says:

"I tell you that this king has a multitude of lieges (*feoilz*), and they are of this sort. For they are lieges of their lord in this world and the next, as they themselves say ... These lieges attend their lord at court; and ride with the king; and bear great lordship about him; and wherever the king goes these barons keep him company; and they have very great lordship in all the kingdom. And know that when the king dies, and his corpse is burning in the great fire, then all these barons who were his lieges, as I have already said, cast themselves into the fire and burn themselves with the king to keep him company in the next world ... When the king dies, and he leaves a great treasure, and the sons who remain would not touch it for anything in the world ... And for this reason there is a most immense quantity of treasure in this kingdom."

10.2. The real basic movement was towards the creation of a counterpart to the new trader. Trade on an international scale had become very profitable, as (Fig. 48) could be seen



Fig. 48. Seagoing Indonesian ship of about the 8th century A.D., from a relief at Boro-bodur. Note the sails without oars, but also the outrigger and the steering oar in place of stern-post rudder.

at the bigger ports. Prevailing seasonal winds, currents, estuaries, roadsteads, harbours, and pirates had all been known for centuries. The trade was served, at least as far as the Malabar coast, by four-masted south-Chinese ships with stern-post rudders. Drawing not less than ten feet, with crews of 200 to 300, 50 or 60 individual cabins for merchants on the single

deck, thirteen watertight bulkheads, cargo capacity of 6000 baskets of pepper, and several large tenders to each ship, these prove the growth of prodigious trade exchange (Marco Polo; book 3, chap. 1; Benedetto pp. 161-2). Such large Chinese ships continued to carry the trade to and from the east for a couple of centuries more (*Bat.* 235-6). The articles of medieval Chinese manufacture found at Zimbabwe and all along the western coast of Africa would have been transported in such vessels. The Muslims took the trade to the east from Arabia, mostly to India and Indonesia. Indian shipping was peculiarly inefficient. The great Sātavāhana-Jātaka seafaring tradition had died out completely along with Gupta and earlier craftsmanship. Friar Menetillus reported at the same time as Marco Polo (about 1292) of the west coast :

"There are few craftsmen, for craft and craftsmen have little remuneration, and there is little room for them... If they have a battle, they make short work of it, however great the forces be, for they go to battle naked, with nothing but sword and dagger ... Their ships in these parts are mighty frail and uncouth, with no iron in them, and no caulking. They are sewn like clothes with twine... And they have a frail and flimsy rudder like the top of a table, of a cubit in width, in the middle of the stern ; and when they have to tack, it is done with a vast deal of trouble ; and if it is blowing in any way hard, they cannot tack at all. They have but one sail and one mast, and the sails are either of matting or of some miserable cloth. The ropes are of husk. Moreover their mariners are few and far from good. Hence they run a multitude of risks, insomuch that they are wont to say, when any ship achieves her voyage safely and soundly, that 'tis by God's guidance, and man's skill little availed'. (Yule 3.66) ... It must be known that the pagans (Hindus) do not navigate much, but it is the Moors who carry the merchandise ; for in Calicut there are at least fifteen thousand Moors who are for the greater part natives of the country." (*Var.* 61).

The 'stitching together' is done on the west coast to this day; planks are carefully fitted together, holes bored in both (formerly by a red-hot iron rod or wire), a coir or jute cord steeped in cashew-nut pitch run through just as in sewing. The sails (now mill canvas) and rudders have improved but we must still admit (and not only of seafaring) that obsolete tools of production survive in distressingly great proportion.

The technical deficiency — one great difference between China and India — had a serious administrative concomitant: besides the use of foreign mercenaries, Muslims were often made governors of the ports (Yule 3.68), with unfortunate political consequences. The ginger, pepper, spices, cotton and cloth, indigo, hides and leather, carpets, gems and pearls were commodities. Many of these could not be procured without breaking in upon the previously closed economy of some villages. The port-traders implied the existence of wide-spread inland caravan traders, who could now get their supplies from the countryside, as their limited predecessors could not before the village settlement. These supplies, however, meant the gathering of a surplus in the hands of some people with whom the trader could exchange goods. These people were precisely the lower feudal barons and landholders of this period of feudalism from below. The feudal lord on the largest scale gathered the surplus as taxes, but would not generally trade it himself except when a share of new jewels (e.g. ten percent of all pearls fished off the Comorin coast) were yielded to him as taxes, or when he bought horses and luxury goods. The smaller inland trade could not progress thereby. The villagers had no need to grow spices beyond their immediate needs, unless compelled to do so by heavy taxes, force, or later the profit motive. Feudal rulers had usually (*cf.* Medhātithi on *Ms.* 8.399) taken over the monopoly of some local product whose exceptional value in trade had been proved by private merchants: Saffron in Kaśmīr, pepper in Travancore (*FOM* 1.246), sandalwood in Mysore. This did not mean direct trade or development by state enterprise as in the *Arthaśāstra*, but simply heavier taxes and perhaps farming out the prerogative. Later feudal governors supplemented their income by trade of some kind.

The growth of a land-owner class producing to some extent for a market has been noted in the Goan communes. By the tenth century, villages began to be granted — though rarely — to (non-brahmin) feudatories, (*EI.* 27. 41-7) sometimes for service in wars, often tax-free, but occasionally with the king's prerogatives preserved by excepting some tax from the donation, even to brahmins. Such taxes were the 'thief-

tax' *cora-daṇḍa* (Fleet 27) levied as fine for robberies within village jurisdiction, though not always special ransom-taxes like the *Turuṣka-daṇḍa*, (*EI*. 9.305, 329; 10.21; *IHQ*. 9.128) which continued to increase steadily in number. Relations of the king were employed to the fullest possible extent to oversee tax-collection, the administration, and the army. New officials from the top increased, such as the *rāṇaka*, which originally implied satrapy with membership of a royal family. Its derivative *rāṇā* could be an independent chief. The *ṭhakkura*, still to be seen as Ṭhākūr, and become a surname (e.g. Rabindranāth Ṭāgore) as well as landlord's title, appears about this period; even brahmins could be *ṭhakkuras* without tax-exemption unless specially granted, so that the title has feudal implications (cf. also feudal Nārgāvuṇḍas, *EI*. 27. 179, Oct. 27, 1115 A.D.). From below is visible the regular creation of a new land-owning class, parallel to the brahmins with whom the land had been seeded under royal donations. Of this type are the *rāṣṭrakūṭas* notified in Cālukya land-grants (e.g. *EI*. 5. 79; 118-141) and placed above the normal cultivating settlers, the *kuṭumbinas*. The latter name means merely 'with a family', and ultimately turns into the large modern, *kuṇabī* caste of peasants. The *Rāṣṭrakūṭas*, on the other hand, are connected etymologically both with the royal house of that name which excavated the greatest caves at Ellora, and with the Reḍḍi caste of cultivators and traders in the south. They had clearly the right to bear arms, denied to ordinary settlers, and so bring us close to real feudalism from below, completed when such privileged, armed, landholders were made responsible for tax-collection.

The best illustration of this comes from the development of Kaśmīr.[3] This valley was virtually closed, easy to defend, and comparatively isolated. The chronicle of Kalhaṇa, (*Rāj*.) so neatly substantiated by archaeology and local place-names, gives the course of development which is so difficult to follow elsewhere in India for lack of sources. Kaśmīr differed from other Himālayan valleys like Cambā, which still remains conservative enough to show what feudalism from above would mean. For Kaśmīr, commodity production and distant trade were far more important. The climate of Himālayan regions

means some production of wool and wine, for exchange against the grain which can grow only in the narrow valleys or specially terraced hillsides. Kaśmīr, moreover, had a monopoly of one precious commodity, light enough to be transported over long distances and mountain passes, for which the demand was insatiable : namely, saffron (*Crocus sativus*), which does not grow elsewhere in India. This enabled Kaśmīr to import salt, some metal, cloth, and other goods. It made also for an accumulation of wealth which sometimes led to external military adventures on the part of ambitious Kaśmīrian kings or foreign attempts at invasion. Whenever the state was strong enough, saffron remained a state monopoly. Difficult transport, impossibility of dense settlement, the need for defence against tribesmen, robbers and wild beasts, made it out of the question to disarm the countryside. The caste system was notoriously lax in Kaśmīr. Any merchant or village headman who accumulated a little surplus by trade could arm a few retainers of any caste, command a following, and lord it over his locality. He would collect taxes without passing them on to the state. This led to a struggle of extermination between the king and such *ḍāmaras*, ultimately won by small-scale feudalism under different names. Accumulation was strengthened by periodic famine during which ministers, royal (Tantrin) guards, and others who had any store of grain, would sell it at greatly enhanced prices. The king often created his own feudal barons for local support, while opposing feudal barons set up their own kings or supported pretenders.

Indirectly, the crisis was intensified by the very measures necessary for flood-control and irrigation. These go back to the oldest times, but when first increased by the great Lalitāditya-Muktāpīḍa, they created a fresh surplus and enabled that king to raise a very fine army. Lalitāditya then raided India extensively, down at least to Mālwā, probably to the sea. His heirs received the legacy of a costly central army, administration, tradition of luxury (including fine Sanskrit court-poetry) heavy endowments to temples, and the valuable advice not to let villagers accumulate any goods beyond the barest minimum for subsistence, lest they revolt ; this last principle was adopted by the Delhi sultāns. The extraordinarily com-

plete and scientific waterworks undertaken by the genius of a Caṇḍāla minister Suyya (under Avantivarman) increased village settlement vastly, but prices of the main crop, rice, went down so very much that it became impossible to pay for essential commodities that had to be imported. So Kaśmīrian kings like Jayāpīḍa (8th century A.D.) and Śaṃkaravarman (883-902) began to rescind brahmin and temple grants, taxing temple property. The last desperate resort of the brahmins, a fast unto death, often failed to turn the king's heart. Finally, the cultured Harṣa (1089-1101 A.D.), patron of Sanskrit poetry, himself littérateur and connoisseur, systematically confiscated temple property, had the images removed, publicly defiled, and melted down under a special "minister for uprooting gods (*devotpāṭana-nāyaka*)" who was also a good Hindu. The need for money to pay the army (then engaged in a struggle with Ḍāmaras and pretenders) and for metal (which in Kaśmīr was always in short supply for lack of efficient prospectors) were the only reasons. No theological necessity was discovered, adduced, or needed. Harṣa did employ Muslim '*Turuṣka*' mercenaries, but showed as great contempt for Islam as for his own religion, by his eating pork. The Hindus, brahmins or not, took all this rather calmly (*Rāj.* 7.1103-7 etc.), shared in the profits wherever possible. Some brahmins had already served with distinction in the army. Some of the dynasties were of low origin. Not all the Hindu kings of Kaśmīr kept up the fiction of caste. A complaisant merchant surrendered his wife to a smitten king, who made her his chief queen forthwith. Another queen was a wine-distiller's daughter. Ḍomb relatives of a queen of the lowest caste obtained high offices as well as land grants of *agrahāra* type that had till then been brahmin prerogatives.

Developments in other parts of India were similar in essence. Land grants to others than brahmins, with feudal tenure involving revenue paid to the state, became commoner. Brahmins, if they held land, were usually taxed, even by Hindu kings, whenever a new tax came into existence. For that matter, they had long engaged in trade. In the Punjab, in 1030 A.D. (*Alb.* 2.132) they had to have a dummy vaiśya intermediary before they could engage in trade without loss of

face. Marco Polo (Benedetto p. 189) found brahmins from the Coḷa kingdom in great demand in the south as trade agents, because of their honesty, fair dealing with strangers, low commissions. An increasing number took to arms, became feudal warlords. The process culminated with the Peshwas at Poona, who usurped all power from 1720 but retained the Persian ministerial title. They observed all brahmin ritual, indulged in every luxury, and led armies in war. This echoed the Kaṇvāyana brahmin ministerial usurpation which ended Śuṅga rule nearly 1900 years earlier, but the basic mode of production was as feudal as anywhere else in India, whether Muslim or Hindu. Not only the empire of Delhi but the contemporary Muslim kingdom of Bijāpūr and the Hindu one of Vijayanagar had fundamentally equivalent systems of land-holding and tax-collection. Temple accumulation, it is true, was swept away mostly by Muslims. The underlying reality was not religious, as is seen by the fact that the Muslim conquest of Kaśmīr took place without a blow in 1339. The conversion to Islam had taken place silently even earlier. This did not occasion further spoliation of such temples as remained in Kaśmīr, which were protected by all but one of the Muslim rulers. Nor did it displace brahmins from their position in the administration; even the jargon for official documents remained a mixture of Sanskrit and Persian, apparently till the Mughal annexation. Even in the rest of India, disputes between the followers of Śiva and Viṣṇu resulted in considerable expropriation of temple property by Hindus. The richer landholders under late feudalism could break almost any caste rule with impunity. Those who became landholders by force or royal pleasure could hide their low origin by paying enough priestly brahmins to support their claim. Such ameliorations of caste are known all over the country, including the sudden appearance of new "brahmins." In any case, Islam helped show the hollowness of the system whose gods could not protect their own temples. Caste remained inflexible wherever the classes — particularly ownership of land — were not shaken up by the extensive raids and counter-raids. The Rāṣṭrakūṭa Indra III took Kanauj for a short time (916 A.D.); Kanarese Hindu mercenaries served outside India in the army of Mahmūd of

Ghazni under their own officers (*Alb.* 1.173 ; 2.257). Rājendra Coḷa took Bengal, Orissa, and built up a navy with which he raided and levied tribute from Ceylon, Sumatra, and countries on the bay of Beṅgal (circa 1030 A.D.). What remained unchanged was that the workers had to continue producing a heavier surplus for those who expropriated it.

10.3. The rise of a totally new provincial market is proved also by the beginnings of vernacular literature. Hindi poetry, the *Āndhrabhāratamu* version of the *Mahābhārata*, Telugu inscriptions, old Kanarese poetry, further developments of literary Mahārāṣṭrī show that intercourse between the villages had reached a new level. Mere change of quantity, density of settlement, had led to a change of quality which, for the first time, gave rise to nationalities. Tamil, of course, had long had its own development. The most impressive, characteristic, new literature of the time is in the *rāso* sagas of Rājasthān which correspond to medieval European lays of prowess and chivalry. The best known of these, the *Rāso* of Pṛthvī Rāja Cauhān (Cāhamāna ; killed shortly after his defeat by Mahmūd Ghūrī in 1191) has been published[4] only in a highly inflated version with form modelled consciously upon the *Mbh.* and the Purāṇas. The family of the original bard, Cand Bardāī, still exists, and may soon be persuaded to give up what they claim to be the original composition of the ancestral troubadour. Court Sanskrit continued side by side, to furnish a very curious contrast with the (not less fantastic) *rāsos* about the same character. There is, for example, a romantic, legendary *Pṛthvī-rāja-vijaya*, of which a badly crumbled birch-bark MS survives to prove how different an impression is given of the romantic hero by the classical style and idiom. The Rajput name Hammīra derives from the Muslim Amīr. We have the *Hammīra-rāso*. The *Hammīra-māhakāvya*, by Nayacandra Sūri (end of the 15th century) commemorates the honourable but futile sacrifice of his own life and that of all his following by the last Cauhan prince of Raṇṭhambhor besieged in 1301 by Alāuddin, while *Hammīra-mada-mardana* also in Sanskrit refers to an Amīr's defeat. The *Vīsaladeva-rāso* has little in common with the *Lalita-Vigraha-rāja* (*IA.*

20.212 ff.), a drama whose fragments have been discovered at Ajmer carved on stone. The kings bore the same name, but the Sanskrit drama has ornate stanzas recited by king and his Turuṣka rival. Putting all these together gives little information, except that Sanskrit poetry could no longer portray reality. What we do know is that the Rajputs traced their descent from the legendary Bappa Rāvaḷ (whose coins[5] seem to have been found) ; and they had a tradition of ancient, former kinship with some Paṭhān clans who were also military groups living by the sword. They were raiders whenever possible, mercenaries when it paid, but could be peasant cultivators at home. Their military hierarchy, with each man owing fealty to one acknowledged leader, goes back to their tribal and clan origin.[6] The complete political inconsequence is also due to the persistence of a narrow tribal outlook. Their home territory in comparatively barren Rājasthān (which still awaits irrigation) lay across the important trade-route to the south. The Rajputs, therefore, show us — in an undeveloped stage — the superficial elements that go to make feudalism, but not a supply of labour to cultivate extensive fields. Such captains were well suited for service under kings that had already developed administrative units of 84, then 42, and 21 villages, perhaps the last formal stage between the two types of feudalism, from above and below.

It was the market that made the Mohammedan conquest different from transient raids. Islamic raiders appeared within a hundred years of the Prophet's death over a vast territory extending from southern France to the Punjab. Their role varied according to the history of the locality. Over the former Roman empire, they brought freedom from imperial tax-collectors and the exactions of the Church. In Persia, their conquest freed the population from intolerable exactions of nobles and kings. Everywhere, they played a role similar to that of the Aryans over two millennia earlier, in breaking down hidebound custom, in the adoption and transmission of new technique. The analogy breaks down in that their stimulus to production was much less than with the Aryans, who had brought far more new territory under the plough. The Muslims did introduce the Chinese discoveries of gunpowder, paper,

porcelain, and tea to India. Their Arabic translations of Greek science and geometry, Indian medicine and algebra, with new contributions of their own, enabled medieval Europe to take the first steps towards its Renaissance. The main contribution was to sweep off certain decadent forms of the relations of production; this revealed the real prop of the class-state as force, not religion.

The first Muslim raiders under Muhammad ibn-al-Kāsim in the Punjab made good use of the ancient sun-temple at Multān. They protected but held the idol as hostage and source of profit from the numerous pilgrims (cf. *Beal* 2.274). People were left "to their ancient belief except in the cases of those who wanted to become Muslims" (*Alb.* 1.21), by consent of the Khalīf (*ED.* 1.185-6). It is recorded that, in return, the brahmins went about the villages preaching submission. This was far cry indeed from that early brahminism within the tribe which had instigated resistance to the last man against the overpowering Macedonian phalanx. The aim of the Muslims then was to secure an outlet down the Indus, to the sea, which was accomplished within the next two centuries. The vast booty taken by Mahmūd of Ghāzni, who destroyed the richest temples at Somnāth, Ṭhānesar, Mathurā, Kanauj meant no change of policy. Mahmūd followed a normal pattern in expropriating previous accumulation. Nevertheless each successive raid marked a steady advance in penetration by Muslim traders, who also went far ahead of the generals. Thus, at Verāvaḷ, and in Goa, we find protection given to Muslims, their converts, and mosques, by Hindu kings. Tāranāth, a late 16th century Tibetan historian of Buddhism in India, speaks of the peaceful advance of Muslim (Turuṣka) doctrine in the last days of northern Buddhism, when fresh cults like the Dharma-yāna still arose out of the most primitive tribal practices (e.g., Ḍombhi-Herūka), to spread in the name of the long-decayed religion. Buddhist monasteries still received occasional charters as from the Gāhaḍavāla kings (*EI.* 11.20-26) and gifts from conservative pilgrims.

The easy conquests of Muhammad bin Bakhtyār Khalji show that Muslim advance in the north at the end of the

12th century A.D., meant partly a link-up between these scattered communities of Islamic merchants and proselytes (*Tār.* 255) who immediately took to the sword and joined in the general looting. It also proves the complete demoralization of the countryside. Naḍīā (Navadvīpa) was taken at the end of the century by this Muhammad, who initiated the raid upon the palace with no more than eighteen men of the advance guard (*Tabakāt-i-Nāsiri*, 1.565-8), apparently having penetrated into the city with Muslim traders, for whom his little troupe was mistaken. Nevertheless, the fact that a few men could ruin the capital, by panic, and put the aged Lakṣmaṇasena permanently to flight, proves that the people had no interest in preserving their rulers. The last great Hindu kingdom in the north had been wiped out by Kutb-ud-dīn's defeat Jayaccandra Gāhaḍavāla. It is notable that none of these contemporary events made the slightest impression upon the mannerisms or complacency of the local intelligentsia. The last great Sanskrit literature, written about this time and in this very region, contains not the slightest mention of contemporary events. The Gāhaḍavāla court-poet Śri-Harṣa (not to be confused with the king-poet five centuries earlier) wrote beautifully about the romance of the *Mbh.* couple Nala and Damayantī. Dhoyī, Lakṣmaṇasena's poet, imitated Kālidāsa's *Meghadūta* ('Cloud-messenger') with a *Pavanadūta* ('Wind-messenger'). Sena court-poets continued their mannered stupidities after the flight to East Bengal. The Pālas had decayed into a trifling country family. The *Rāmacarita* of Sandhyākaranandin reduced Sanskrit poetry to the level of an acrostic, for every stanza can be read in two different ways: to represent the history of the mythical Rāma, or of the last great Pāla king Rāmapāla ; in effect, it cannot be understood at all. The greatest poet of them all, Jayadeva, derived his strength from having wandered about the country as minstrel, close to the common people : he has also left some ancient Hindi poetry, though loved, admired, revered for his *Gīta-Govinda*, the most musical of Sanskrit poetic dramas.

Reading the Sanskrit classics, one would hardly suspect the existence of the Muslims. The Muslim accounts might

lead anyone to believe that fighting was a lost art in India. Muhammad Bakhtyār made this mistake himself, when he attacked the undeveloped northern region, towards Nepāl, with his greatest army, a picked force of 10,000 veteran horsemen eager to add the loot of Tibet to that of Bengal. The tribesmen resorted to guerrilla warfare. Muhammad was lucky to escape with no more than a hundred followers (*Tabakāt-i-Nāsiri* 1.560-72). He died soon after of rage and exhaustion, or was assassinated in sick-bed by one of his own captains. A new round of civil war began at the top over the 'solid foundations of Asiatic despotism', the unresisting villages. Nevertheless, there remained a class-conflict, manifested hereafter in religious disguise. The movement begun in the south by Rāmānuja and Madhva, in Bengal by Caitanya, developed into the most acrid theological dispute between the followers of Viṣṇu and of Śiva, the former of whom had assimilated Buddha as the ninth incarnation of their own god. The real struggle was between the great feudal nobility and the new small landowners, say essentially between feudalism from above and that from below. The latter won eventually. In East Bengal, the oppressed villagers changed from their own brand of Buddhism to Islam. This conversion laid a secure foundation for later partition, but without real economic improvement of the peasant's lot, except for a few new landowners. The religious democracy of Islam attracted very few proselytes after the invaders had settled down into stratified classes, for there was no economic democracy to go with it.

Abu'l Raihān Albirūnī, a Khorezmian dependent of Mahmūd of Ghazni, writing in Arabic (about 1030 A.D.), was interested primarily in the science and writings of the Hindus, which he studied carefully in the original Sanskrit and of which he has left a priceless account. The character of Indian scholars, the characteristic mixture of superstition with science among a people "who like to mix up peas with wolf's beans, pearls with dung (*Alb.* 2.114)" did not escape him. The Nārāyaṇa cult seems to have displaced Śiva at Multān in his day. His preoccupation with learned treatises interfered with observation of the common people. According to him, the

four castes existed and lived together in the villages, outside which there dwelt eight menial casteless guilds, and still lower untouchables (*Alb.* 1.99-104). Inasmuch as the blacksmith, carpenter, potter are not in his eight guilds, it is difficult to tally this with reality, or with the *Amarakośa* scheme unless these higher artisans were caste śūdras. *Alb.* 2.149 describes Indian kings as collecting ground rent above the 1/6th share of grain as tribute, without details.

10.4. The crucial metamorphosis of the feudal period was completed, after several false starts, in the reign of Firūz Tughlaq (1351-1388). Feudalism from above had its last powerful upsurge during the rule of Alā'uddin Khalji (1296-1316). The details may be quoted from contemporary historians, who themselves favoured the later feudalism.

"(Alā'uddīn) ordered that, wherever there was a village held by proprietary right (*milk*), in free gift (*in'ām*), or as a religious endowment (*wakf*), it should by one stroke of the pen be brought back under the exchequer. The people were pressed and amerced, money was exacted from them on every kind of pretence. Many were left without any money, till at length it came to pass that, excepting *maliks*, and *amīrs*, officials, Multānis (merchants), and bankers, no one possessed even a trifle in cash. So rigorous were the confiscations that, beyond a few thousand *tankās*, all the pensions, grants of land (*in'ām wa mafrūz*) and endowments in the country were appropriated. The people were all so absorbed in obtaining the means of living, that the name of rebellion was never mentioned. Secondly, he provided carefully for the acquisition of intelligence, that no action of good or bad men was concealed from him. No one could stir without his knowledge and whatever in the houses of nobles, great men, and officials, was communicated to the Sultan by his reporters. Nor were the reports neglected, for explanations of them were demanded. The system of reporting went to such a length that nobles dared not speak aloud even in the largest palaces. . . . The sultan gave commands that noblemen and great men should not visit each other's houses or give feasts, or hold meetings. They were forbidden to form alliances without consent from the throne. . . . The sultan requested the wise men to supply some rules and regulations for grinding down the Hindus, and for depriving them of that wealth and property which fosters disaffection and rebellion. There was to be one rule for the payment of tribute, applicable to all, from the *khūt* to the *balahar* (scavenger), and the heaviest tribute was not to fall upon the poorest. The

Hindu was to be so reduced as to be left unable to keep a horse to ride on, to carry arms, to wear fine clothes, or to enjoy any of the luxuries of life...All cultivation was to be carried on by measurement at a certain rate for every *biswā*. Half (the produce) was to be paid without any diminution, and this rule was to apply ...without the slightest distinction. The *khūts* were to be deprived of their peculiar privileges. The second (new regulation) related to buffaloes, goats, and other animals from which milk is obtained. A tax for pasturing at a fixed rate was to be levied, and was to be demanded from every house, so that no animal, however wretched, should escape the tax. Heavier burdens were not to be placed upon the poor, but rules as to the payment of tribute were to apply equally to rich and poor. Collectors, clerks, and other officers employed in revenue matters, who took bribes and acted dishonestly, were all dismissed... (These regulations) were so strictly carried out that the *chaudhuris*, and *khūts*, and *mukaddims* (various types of village headmen) were not able to ride on horseback, to find weapons, or to get cloth, or to indulge in betel... The people were brought to such a state of obedience that one revenue officer would string twenty *khūts*, *mukaddims*, or *chaudhuris* together by the neck and enforce payment by blows. No Hindu could hold up his head, and in their houses no sign of gold, silver, *tankās*, or *jitals* (small change), or of any superfluity was to be seen. Driven by destitution, the wives of the *khūts* and *mukaddims* went and served for hire in the houses of the Musulmans... Every single *jital* against the names (of revenue officers) was ascertained from the books of the village accountants. There was not a chance of a single *tankā* being taken dishonestly or as a bribe from any Hindu or Musulman. The revenue collectors and officers were so coerced and checked that for five hunderd or a thousand *tankās* they were imprisoned and kept in chains for years. Men looked upon revenue officers as something worse than fever. Clerkship was a great crime, and no man would give his daughter to a clerk. Death was deemed preferable to revenue employment." (*ED*. 3.179-183).

Some of these measures are startlingly like the *Arthaśāstra*. Inasmuch as Alā'uddīn had a Jain mint-master whose unpublished notes on coinage still exist, it is not impossible that the sultan found someone tell him of Mauryan regulations. The purpose was to keep a central army in control of a large empire, most of which paid tribute in cash, elephants, precious materials. The above special regulations were ONLY for that portion of the empire directly administered by the center, without which the army could not be maintained for wider tribute

collection. "Hindu" means simply native leader of a land-holding group, under whatever tenure. A scale of prices was fixed for Delhi. The *doābs* (Delhi, Meerut, Aligarh districts) paid taxes in kind. Traders in staples and caravan men were settled by force near the city. Their families were virtually hostages; but they were on the whole treated well. All prices were regulated, so that even in times of scarcity, prices did not vary. The purpose was to keep the common soldier, paid in cash, satisfied; this could not have been done without effective price regulation.

"Alā'uddīn took such pains to keep down the prices of necessities of life (in Delhi) that his exertions have found a record in famous histories. To the merchants he gave wealth, and placed before them goods in abundance, and gold without measure. He showed them every kingly favour, and fixed on them regular salaries. With this went drastic punishment for short weight; flesh was cut off from the vendor's haunches to make up the shortages. Poor, ignorant boys were sent by the espionage service to make purchases; should any be short, quick, effective retribution followed.... Nay, they gave such good weight that the purchaser often got somewhat in excess." (*ED.* 3.349, and 3.196).

The consequences were four desperately serious revolts of the nobles in Alā'uddīn's time; and there was the promotion of slaves like the eunuch-general, the lord lieutenant Malik Kāfūr, to the highest command — wielded with ability, but followed up by intrigue. It was much too late to restore the *Arthaśāstra* state when the feudal basis was untouched beyond the Doabs.

The Muslim historians, who belonged to the class of secretariat workers and small feudal landholders, have a sigh of relief when describing the reign that followed. Ghiyāsuddīn reduced the assessment to 1/10 or 1/11 of the gross. Most of the difference between the old and the new assessment went into the pockets of the collection agents, not the producers. Still, the idea was to promote greater cultivation year by year (*ED.* 3.230). "The Hindus were to be so taxed that they might not be blinded with wealth, and so become discontented and rebellious; nor, on the other hand, be so reduced to poverty and destitution as to be unable to pursue their husbandry." This specious philosophy ignores the fact that all major rebel-

lions had been by Muslim court nobles and army commanders. The reality was that the older system had ground all classes too fine to produce any revenue at all. Muhammad Tughlaq attempted some new experiments, including token currency, change of the capital to Daulatābād in the south, and a disastrous military expedition on a supposed northern route to the fabulous wealth of China. Ibn Battūtā has left a clear description of the Delhi government in his day, and of Muhammad's experiments with necromancy (*Bat.* 225-6). Ultimately Firūz Tughlaq yielded to feudalism from below, and ruled without rebellion till nearly the end of his reign. However, he was favoured by good harvests; even his admirers said that only luck kept prices low during his reign, as draconic regulations had during that of Alā'uddīn. What they liked most was his distribution of villages and land among his followers.

"In the reigns of former rulers of Delhi, it had never been the rule to bestow villages as stipends upon office bearers ... (under Firūz). If an officer of the army died, he was to be succeeded (in possession of the grant) by his son; if he had no son, by his son-in-law; if he had no son-in-law, by his slave; if he had no slave, by his nearest relation; if he had no relation, by his wives ... The revenues of the territories of the Doāb in his region amounted to 8,000,000 *tankās*... of the territories of Delhi to 60,850,000 *tankās* ... All this revenue was duly apportioned out; each Khan received a sum suitable to his exalted position. The Amīrs and Maliks also obtained allowances according to their dignity and the officials were paid enough to provide a comfortable living. The soldiers of the army received grants of land, enough to support them in comfort, and the irregulars received payment from the government treasury. Those soldiers who did not receive their pay in this manner were regularly supplied with assignments upon the revenues. When these assignments of the soldiers arrived in the fiefs, the holders of the assignments used to get about half the total amount from the holders of the fiefs. It was the practice of certain persons in those days to buy up these assignments, which was an accommodation to both parties. They used to give one third of the value for them in the city, and received a half in the district. The purchasers of these assignments carried on a traffic in them, and gained a good profit, many of them got rich and made their fortunes." (*ED.* 3.344-6).

The sultān Firūz abolished 23 former taxes, many of which nevertheless continued to be surreptitiously collected by dishonest officials whenever they could get away with the profits.

The legal taxes were 1/10 from cultivated lands as *kharāj*, the *zakāt* ('alms'), the *jizyā* from Hindus 'and other separatists', 1/5 of all spoils & produce of mines. The existence of the feudal class depended upon the difference between this assessment and whatever could be collected from the land by ancient custom, force, or direct cultivation by the feudatory. The Hindu temples had begun to attract some Muslims also, and were henceforth systematically broken up by the autocrat. This did not prevent the Muslims who had settled upon the land from steadily becoming, in their own way, as superstitious as and more bigoted than the Hindus — due to the 'idiocy of village life'. Of course, many Hindu landholders were converted, to preserve title and save taxes. The brahmins had fasted against the *jizyā*, many of them being virtually almsmen. The Delhi *jizyā* was 40 tankās for class I, 20 for the second, 10 for the third annually. The brahmins remained fasting at the palace gates for several days, till on the point of death. Then other Hindus intervened, agreed to pay the impost, which the sultan fixed at 10 *tankās* and 50 *jitals* per head. Firūz dug two canals from the Jumnā and the Sutlej, both via Karnāl into Delhi, and many lesser waterworks. A separate water tax was levied, amounting to 10%, after due consultation with the men of religion. These *ulemā* had enraged Ala'uddīn by telling him that he had no right to anything more than his meanest soldier, that the religious democracy of Islam went as far as economic democracy in profiting from the infidel. The consideration they were now shown secured a class basis for the sultanate. Firūz indulged in production for himself, with the help of slaves:

"The sultan Firūz was very diligent in providing slaves, and he carried his care so far as to command his great fief-holders and officers to capture slaves whenever they were at war, and to pick out the best for the service of the court. (These presents were valued, like elephants etc., and deductions made for them, which no ruler had done before)...Those chiefs who brought many slaves received the highest favour...The numbers brought every year exceed description...When they were in excess, the sultan sent them to Multān, Dīpālpūr, Hisār Firozah, Samāna, Gujarāt, and all the other feudal dependencies. In all cases, provision was made for their support in a liberal manner. In some places they were provided for

in the army, and villages were granted to them; those who were placed in cities had ample allowances varying from 100 down to 10 *tankās*, which was the lowest amount. These allowances were paid in full, without any deduction, at the treasury, every six, four, or three months...Some (slaves) were placed under tradesmen and were taught mechanical arts, so that about 12,000 slaves became artisans (*kasīb*) of various kinds...The institution (of slavery) took root in the very centre of the land, and the sultan looked upon its due regulation as one of his incumbent duties...There was no occupation in which the slaves of Firūz Shāh were not employed. None of the sultan's predecessors had ever collected so many slaves. The late sultan Alā'uddīn had drawn together about 50,000 slaves, but after him no sultan had directed his attention to raising a body of them until sultan Firūz adopted the practice...When the slaves under the great feudal chieftains became too numerous, some of them, by order of the sultan, were given in the charge of *amīrs* and *maliks*, that they might learn the duties of their respective employments...But after his (Firūz Shāh's) death, the heads of these favoured servants (i.e. slaves) of his were cut off without mercy, and were made into heaps in front of the darbār." (*ED.* 3.330-342).

Slavery was thus an attempt on the part of the Sultan to become less dependent upon his vassals. The bondsmen helped run his private plantations whose produce not only supplied the palace but was also sold in the open market, as were the rugs and fabrics woven by his slave factories. Forty thousand slaves were guards in royal equipages or palaces. The total number of these imperial slaves (*bandagān-i-khās*) was 180,000, as against the 50,000 of Alā'ud-dīn. As part of his wife's dower, Firūz had received a slave Imād-ul-Mulk, who later became the richest man in Firūz's reign, having treasure estimated at 130 million *tankās*. "He held the fief of Rapri and looked very vigilantly after it." When we consider that most of the abler previous emperors of Delhi had been slaves, it is clear that this sort of slavery was not essential to the productive mode. The feudal lords felt it dangerous enough for them to slaughter a large number of the slaves the moment Firūz died. In general, feudal slaves were mostly household servants, for independence from local retainers who might, in a crisis, show loyalty to their own caste or community. For smaller landholders, particularly soldiers pensioned off, the slave was often the heir, actually so adopted, who would care for the aged or disabled master during his lifetime (*MEI.* 3.496-7).

About 1800, North Canara district had an estimated 16,201 slaves against 146,800 free persons (*BJ.* 2.442). South Canara, 47,358 slaves in a total population of 396,672 (*BJ.* 3.2-6); Malabar 16,574 slaves, 106,500 free (*BJ.* 2.362). This included women and children, yet these proportions are usually high. Slaves had also a wage scale but in Malabar were abominably treated (*BJ.* 2.371). The reason for this brief period of late slavery was in part historical and partly the high relative incidence of commodity production at the time and place. Muslim conquest had broken up the village communes, except in form over a small portion of the land, to leave a series of middling landowners. None of them had a large plantation, nor a sizeable gang of slaves ; a couple of field slaves (and their families) seems to have been the norm. These landlords, freed from previous restrictions of the commune, were not a feudal hierarchy because the Muslims generally contented themselves with revenue collection from a distance, the settled Mohammedans being traders. Transport along the coast and by estuary was unusually good. External demand for local produce, primarily the coconut, was high. So it paid the landowner, debarred by caste and inclinations from serious manual labour, to maintain a few slaves from tribesmen whom famine and the clearing of tribal lands had driven into debt and perpetual servitude. The same careful observer, Francis Buchanan, noted that in feudal Bihār (*MEI*) the lesser masters were only too glad to have the slave abscond, thus saving them the price of his maintenance. The greater northern landholders generally maintained larger groups of slaves, mostly for prestige and housework. In Goa, adjoining North Kanara, where the primitive commune survived, there was no slavery ; the ostentatious boronial type * did exist in the "New Conquests". There was no law that compelled their servitude, no way of selling nor of dismissing them. They had to be addressed and

* For example, when my inept great-grandfather signed away considerable lands held by feudal right and migrated to a deserted village in the "Old Conquests", two older hereditary *bande* house-slaves followed him into exile, worked in the fields to supplement the meagre household income, shared the thatched adobe dwelling, and the thin fare.

treated with some respect by the young children of the house, given seats of honourable rank at weddings. The younger had to be found mates from among their own kind, which inevitably formed a tiny separate caste that vanished before 1900. Such a life was by no means idyllic, but it cannot be compared to the chattel slavery over which a fearful carnage was being made in the American Civil War at the same date, nor to ancient Greek and Roman slavery. The institution was suppressed in British India by a decree of 1843, dying out in the rest of the country more because of its economic nonviability than British influence. On the other hand, the really deep-rooted superstitions † and usages, including caste, remained.

10.5. In the main the economic function of such feudalism amounted to increasing density of settlement by force,[7] and by investment on the part of the feudal lords. For example, water-works, flood-control, and irrigation, beyond the power and territory of any one village, were undertaken by the landlord over several villages, and kept up season after season. These were the most paying of investments, and the rent collected by the landlord then amounted to 50% or more (*BPL.* 196-210), generally by the *agor baṭāī* system of division after the crops were threshed. There was the *bhāolī* system of commutation for an estimated crop yield, payment being made in cash to the landlord. The first implies that the feudal owner

†For example, by the simple fact of being the first male child born in the direct line after my paternal grandfather's death I acquired his transmigratory soul, nick-name, and name as a matter of course. As a modest, well-bred brahmin woman, my widowed grandmother (who died in 1916) could not address me by either name, though I was her favourite grandchild, pampered and disciplined at the same time. On every seasonal return from the distant city to the village in my early boyhood, I would first touch her feet in salutation. The effects of possible evil eyes (*drisṭa*) would be ceremoniously warded off my young head by ritual. She would then seat me upon her lap, in the presence of such of the household as were at home, and put sugar into my mouth with a benediction that my words might be sweet. Those who witnessed this charming, ridiculous, now forgotten observance feel, judging from the results, that she did not use enough sugar !

then deals with some merchant, the second that the merchant can trade with the tenant directly.

The relation between the two types of feudalism, the mechanism of the inevitable, rapid transformation is shown by characteristic examples :

"When the (Utraulā) state was reduced to subjection by the Mohammedan power, the raja was made to pay tribute, and was left with certain villages of his own, while the Lucknow Government took the rājā's share of revenue from all the rest; but though the rājā lost the revenue of the villages, he still retained a certain lordship over them, and then it was that he began TO RAISE MONEY BY SELLING OR GRANTING (for a consideration) THE COMPLETE ZAMĪNDARĪ RIGHTS IN ONE OR MORE VILLAGES ; this gave not only the internal management and headship, but also the right to all the waste and other 'manorial' rights in this area. The title thus created was known as 'birt zamīndārī', and became prevalent...In this state also there were many villages assigned in jāgīr to the Muhammadan soldiers who had helped the Afghān invader to conquer and possess himself of the Rāj. These 'jāgīrdārs' paid no revenue, and only a small yearly tribute besides the obligation to render military aid. Naturally enough, the families of such grantees became joint owners of the villages, the original landholders being their tenants...In Bengal, for example, the Mughāl Subahdār never set himself to work to eradicate village institutions, or to introduce a new system. Akbar's settlement was in every respect calculated to keep things as they were, and simply to secure the State its punctual realisation of its share in the produce — a share which was payable to the Hindu ruler as much as to them ; but when the State began to appoint revenue agents to collect the revenue, then it was that the original village system, being in natural decay, gave way, and enabled the revenue agents, by mere force of circumstances, to grow into the position of 'proprietor' of the whole...The zamīndār had, as in Bengal, become proprietor in the usual way. He had to make good a heavy assessment to the State, and he consequently had to employ village farmers under him, whose first care was to get in the revenue ; consequently he located cultivators for waste land as he pleased, and if he found that the original occupant of cultivated land did not manage properly, or did not pay, he unceremoniously thrust him out. No wonder then that the original land-tenures were obliterated, and the zamindar became landlord... (Quoting A Lyall, *Imp. Gazetteer* for Berar, p. 96): Métairies are going out of fashion. As the country gets richer the prosperous cultivator will not agree to pay a rent of half the produce, and demands admission to partnership. Money rents are also coming into usage

slowly...The land now occasionally falls into the hands of classes who do not cultivate, and who are thus obliged to let to others. The money-lenders can now sell up a cultivator living on his field, and give a lease for it; formerly they could hardly have found a tenant." (*B-P.*, Manual, pp. 56, 652-3, 635).

This shows how feudal and bourgeois tenures of land were created. The force used was of arms too, in the final analysis, not 'mere' force of circumstances. The strong feudal state not only destroyed the old type of village ownership, but also destroyed its own basis by not regularising the new form of ownership, or giving it security and continuity. The bourgeois state would also dispossess a land-owner for non-payment of revenue, but with more ceremony, and more profit.

The apparently senseless changes of dynasty, increasing raids (specially by the Marāṭhās), and increasingly severe famines had always one systematic cumulative effect, namely the growth of a feudal landowner class. Not only had they the economic power to survive periodic natural disasters, but also the force to annex the best lands for private farming by paid or slave labour; this was, incidentally, the sole function of slavery in the means of production. House slaves were for prestige and ostentation; but the most difficult lands where tenants could not be induced to settle were cultivated by the landlords with slaves who had been purchased for cash but were usually paid by allotment of their own plots, in addition to some food allowance from the landlord's stock of grain. This peculiar type of serf-slavery was rather uncommon. Slavery had quite heterogeneous origins. Many tribal people had fallen into servitude in times of famine and one step away were the tribal castes or poorest cultivators who had at the same time incurred a debt which could not be repaid by generation after generation. This accounts for the lowest retainer castes, such as the Cheruman in Malabar, the Koltas of Jaunsar-Bawar in the Himālayan foothills near Almora, the Hālīs of Gujarāt, and the like. The process of famine-slavery and debt-slavery was known to the ancient *smṛtis* (*Nārada* 5.24-6. *Ms.* 8.415). For that matter, the *Ms.* princeling could easily be modified into a feudal baron, or great feudal landlord. Sometimes, the slave

was farmed out and the hire taken by the owner. On the whole, however, large-scale slavery did not pay. There was no law against runaway slaves, no redress except naked force used by the particular landlord or tax-farmer ; often the absconder was sheltered by some other member of the feudal aristocracy. Some slaves lost their caste by servitude, others preserved it ; some new castes were formed out of slavery and intermarriage. The endless diversity is not worth study except for remnants of bygone ages.

Against man-made calamity, the feudal landlord had a little protection. Any invader would naturally strip the landowners' houses of their accumulated wealth and loot. Nevertheless, the invader who wanted periodic tribute had to recognize someone's feudal rights, so that the number of feudal landowners increased as the central power decayed. These zamīndārs would pay taxes to anyone who was strong enough to collect them. They developed their own walled *gaḍhī* strongholds (*DR.* 1.106), and had a varying number of armed retainers. Progressively, such a baron was more and more responsible for collecting the taxes. Under a strong ruler like Akbar, the demand was made in cash, but at fixed grain prices. Paid state servants or tax-farmers (that had undertaken to convert the (fixed) collection in kind into cash to be paid into the treasury) collected the state revenue, outside the great feudal domains in Rajputānā, the south, and parts of Bengal. Nevertheless, Abu'l Fazl reports in the *Āīn Akbarī* (the *Arthaśāstra*, Domesday Book, and history of the period) that the feudal landholder's retainer armies (*būmi*) then totalled four millions. They were an uncertain factor, useless for the State; the lords always looked to see which side was going to win before sending a contingent (*Mor.* B. 34, 74). The state mechanism thus dispersed among feudal landlords became intolerably costly. The *zamīndār* in happier days had meant simply the man responsible for paying taxes, on behalf of various cultivators. Sometimes, he developed out of the village headman, *mukaddam* or *chaudhary*. The land in such cases was generally cultivated by a *birādarī* ('brotherhood'),

which shows ownership in-common by extension of tribal right or growth of feudal households. *Zamīndārī* also meant till the last century in U.P. "a system of land tenure in which the whole land of the village is held and managed in common. The rents and all other profits from the estate are thrown into a common stock, and after deducting the government revenue (*mālguzārī*) and village expenses (*gāṃv kharch*), the balance is divided among the sharers according to their shares, or the law or custom prevailing in the village" (*Crooke* 284). This signifies a land-owning upper class in general. Lower stages of development from the original village commune were the *bhaiyā-cāra* tenure (*Crooke* 40) where the descendants from a common stock shared responsibility for the joint taxes in proportion to the area occupied by each; the *bhūj-berār* (*Crooke* 43) of Bundelkhand was another system of co-sharing, where "the working power of a man's family came to be the measure of his holding." In the south, ownership was recognized by the *mirāsdārī* tenure, which gave title on condition of payment of a fixed, rather heavy assessment ; the title could be sold, inherited, mortgaged (with right of reversion as soon as the debt was cleared). Therewith went another sort of tenure which was for shorter terms, or less fertile or uncleared lands, where the rent was adjusted, generally on a sliding scale, by the state or its feudal agent according to the crop sown.

Among the factors that caused instability was the lack of a hereditary principle at the top. There were no regular baronies, dukedoms, or marquisates. The great courtier was sometimes a slave. Unless he was a feudal lord or subordinate raja in his own right (in which case the succession was to some extent regular), the emperor was his heir, and often claimed the right. Assignments of military duties and the invariable revenue collection that went with them over the provinces was not hereditary, though again sometimes payment was by temporary feudal rights over the income of some fixed region. There was thus a constant struggle between the secretariat and the higher court nobility, further complicated by careful balancing of parties at court, as for example the Raj-

puts and Paṭhāns. None of this made for permanence. Mughal *jāgīrs* after Aurangzeb and Marāṭhā *jāgīrs* (from the time of the Peshwās) became hereditary but this merely confessed the weakness of the central state in the former case. The Marāṭhās had a good deal of land paying taxes directly to the center.

The ephemeral nature of feudal cities, which produced for a comparatively restricted group of consumers based upon the relatively mobile court and army, is well known. Aurangābād reached a population of 400,000 in the times of Aurangzeb, who administered his empire from that center for many years ; his waterworks, though severely damaged by the efforts of a British engineer to locate their underground source, suffice for the little town that remains. Vijayanagar at its height was one of the most impressive cities in the world. The ruins of the palaces are quite unimpressive, while the house have been washed down into the mud of ploughed fields ; only numerous shrines with tremendous monolithic images tell the visitor that a settlement out of the ordinary existed. The railway did not save Bijāpūr from becoming a glorified village in a famished district. Āgrā was a tiny settlement, even though a capital in Mughal times, as soon as the court moved out. The few cities which had grown into outstanding centers of *usine* hand production did not grow directly into new industrial centers, but were killed with amazing rapidity by British manufactures. For example, Dacca city had a population of some 150,000 when the district annually produced and exported (mostly through the British East India Company) millions of pieces of fine hand-made cloth to Europe and America. By 1837, the movement of cloth was entirely in the opposite direction, and the population of Dacca had sunk within a generation to 20,000. It was not Surat, the East India Company's original trade center, but Bombay — whose street names still betray the villages — that developed the first cloth mills. Correspondingly, Surat faded away.

"Swarms of beyds, looties, and pindarees, all different classes of plunderers, follow the armies, and are far more destructive than the soldiers in the countries through which they pass. These

marauders receive no pay, but give a moiety of the spoil to the commander of the corps to which they respectively attach themselves, and prefer a life of rapine to any other profession : armed with spears and sabres, and provided with hatchets, iron crows, and implements of destruction, they enter villages already laid waste by the army, and deserted by the inhabitants : there, as if a general pillage of grain, furniture and other movables, had not been sufficiently distressing, the pindarees deprive the houses of locks, hinges, and every kind of iron work, with such timber as they think proper ; then digging up the floors in search of grain, and demolishing the walls in hopes of finding concealed treasure, they conclude by setting fire to what they cannot carry off : although there is scarcely anything that does not turn to account in the camp bazar, where a rusty nail is taken in exchange for some article of provision.... These pindarees, and various descriptions of unarmed followers of the camp, swell the Indian armies to an amazing number. When Raghoba's forces marched towards the ministerial troops, after the junction, they consisted of an hundred thousand, including camp-followers of all sorts ; the cattle exceed two hundred thousand : the confederates were still more numerous....Raghoba's encampment covered a space of many square miles ; the bazar, or market-place, belonging to his own division, and to the principal generals, contained many thousand tents, where every trade and profession was carried on with as much regularity as in a city. Goldsmiths, jewellers, bankers, drapers, druggists, confectioners, carpenters, tailors, tent-makers, corn-grinders, and farriers, found full employment ; as did whole rows of silver, iron, and copper-smiths ; but those in the greatest and most constant requisition, seem to be cooks, confectioners, and farriers." (*FOM*. 1.344-5).

This description of the camp of Raghunātha Rāo Peshwā in 1775 would apply to virtually any later feudal camp. With its women, children, servants, merchants, and artisans, the camp became a city the moment it ceased moving. But it was not a city that produced commodities for the use of society, rather one that devastated the countryside while eating up local produce.

At the other end, however, there developed a class of workers who took the place of the serf, and upon whose existence the system really depended. These were not the slaves but the workers who had little or no land of their own. They came into their own at harvest time, and for the pre-monsoon tillage. The weather made concentrated use of all labour-power essential (as to this day) because of the primitive tools employed. The feudal zamīndār or tax-farmer did not scorn

to press such labour, to appropriate the plough and oxen of the tenants for work on his own land, but that only meant ruin and lesser revenue next year ; the pressed labour either starved to death or ran away. An early decree of Jahāngīr tried to suppress this type of encroachment. The Khots in the Koṅkaṇ, as tax-collecting agents for an average of two or three villages each, took at least a third of the total crop from the cultivator against a fixed cash payment to the state. By the time of the Peshwās, they had the right to claim free labour (*begār veṭh*) from the villagers for their own manorial holdings. These holdings were generally family-sized plots or fields, and two or three days' work by the combined villagers sufficed to get the work out of the way. Sometimes, the provincial governor might, with his own hand, publicly execute a small tenant for not cultivating the land that produced revenue for the state, but the real force was hunger, lack of enough land. Thus the labourers were paid either in cash with food-supply for the working days, or by shares. This never sufficed to keep them for the whole year, so had to be supplemented by other work. Grierson noted :

"If we exclude other sources of income, 70% of the holdings of the district do not support their cultivators. Those of them who have sufficient clothing and two meals a day must, in addition to cultivation, have other sources of livelihood....All persons of the labouring classes, and 10% of the cultivating and artisan classes, may be considered as insufficiently clothed, or insufficiently fed, or both. This would make about 45% of the population of the district, or, to use round numbers, a million people....The poorest classes cannot indulge in a (full) meal, even in the most prosperous localities and seasons, more than once or twice a week....Except Ḍoms, men of all castes, even the poorest, own at least one metal plate and a metal pot. The cooking utensils and waterpots are of earthen ware. Metal utensils are among the first things to be sold off in years of bad harvests, and as these have been rather frequent of late, their use is decreasing....In hot weather the cattle spend the day licking the dry roots of the grass on the parched-up common land, and in the evening when they are driven home to the byre, they are only given some dry and uncut paddy straw....(Labourers were emigrating to cities) as darwans, peons, and the like, and as weavers in the jute mills. Men of the Jolāhā caste take specially

to the latter occupation. The Howrah mills are full of Gayā Jolāhās." (*NDG.* 95-126).

The people described, in the Gayā district at the end of the 19th century, were not worse off than for several centuries preceding. The British had fixed land tenure and taxes by permanent settlements, perpetuating the misery. That the Howrah jute mills, whose profits went then entirely to British shareholders, needed cheap labour might have had something to do with the little publicity Grierson's careful survey has received. He himself spent the rest of his days compiling the Linguistic Survey of India. The British ruling class preferred to read Kipling, who brought home to them the glories of an empire over 'lesser breeds without the law'.

10.6. A late development of the period was of new cults transcending religious barriers, the inevitable result of a common village life shared by Hindu and Muslim peasants. Marco Polo and Ibn Battūta saw Buddhists, Muslims, and Christians pay homage to a relic on Adam's Peak in Ceylon. In Assam and Bengal (*MEI.* 3.463, 3.512), this took the form of joint pilgrimages for some deity or deified human as a saintly *pīr*. The most remarkable of these was Satya Pīr, for whose cult there seems to be no real evidence before the beginning of the 18th century, though the saint's life was rapidly developed and popularized by such Hindu poems as the *Satya Pīrer Kathā* (in Bengali, ed. Śrī-nagendranāth Gupta, Calcutta Uni. 1930) by a brahmin Rāmeśvara Bhaṭṭācāryya. The cult spread all over India in the guise of *satya-nārāyaṇa* ('the true Nārāyaṇa), a popular democratic Hindu observance without religious sanction, benefit of brahmin priest, or fixed date. However, many Hindu villages without a Muslim inhabitant would often invite some Mohammedan to set up the *tāziyas* till Hindu-Muslim tension grew under foreign management. We may recall that the teaching of Guru Nānak (1469-1538) attracted both Muslims and Hindus, as did the simple poetry of the earlier Muslim weaver Kabīr (1455-1517), to whose sect even Hindu parents still dedicate their children. Akbar hesitantly tried a synthesis of religions with himself at the head, as an experimental state cult, but the new departure

was neither carefully thought out nor based on the needs of any powerful class. Muslim intransigence, ostensibly founded upon the intolerant theology of the Koran, first kept this amalgamation by new cults from going too far. Later, British imperial policy encouraged dissensions between Indian religious communities. The bitter productive shortage that lay at the foundation of such measures is quite obvious. For Aurangzeb's decaying empire, revenue had to be raised by any measure however outrageous ; the revived *jizyā* tax and anti-Hindu bent were a fiscal necessity. With the British, the need was to suppress the aspirations of the new Indian bourgeoisie for at least a share of political control. It happened that the Muslims formed a third of the population but with less than a ninth of the total wealth ; this share of the wealth, moreover, stagnated in semi-feudal landholdings, without turning into modern capital (banks, factories, share-investment). The religious tension covered a real economic tension, beyond the reach of theology, exploited by the foreign rulers.

Caste was related to economic strata. The brahmins paid a lower tax on the whole for the same amount of land. In part, this was claimed as of ancient privilege. The brahmin, who might be illiterate in U.P., would threaten to spill his own blood, kill a child, burn alive some old woman of his family, or fast to death ; the sin would fall on the head of the feudal lord. Sometimes, this action was taken in support of a pretender to land title (*DR.* 1. app. XIV). Descendants of the ancient Nagvā (at present the grounds of the Banāras Hindu University) grantees of Govindacandra Gāhaḍavāla (Chap. III, note 15) resorted to extreme measures to preserve and extend their privilege of tax-free cultivation :

"...the inhabitants of some villages such as Nugwah, where about 2000 Brahmins live together and are all in good and easy circumstances so as to enable them to carry on their tillage and agriculture to advantage. The extent of land in the said village is about 1500 Beegahs, and as this does not suffice for their exertions, they extend their cultivating operations throughout 20 other villages as Paykasht (contract) Ryots, but in every one of them they show their wanton lincentiousness in regard to the payment of the revenue, keeping themselves always ready and prepared with a razor (for

self-mutilation). I have heard that 203 of them sacrificed themselves before Meer Sharf Ally, a former Amil's Pallankeen, on which occasion there arose such a tumult that the Meer was glad to seek his safety in a precipitate retreat, shortly after which, however, Raja Cheyt Singh despatched among them a Mohammedan Jamadar who punished them severely." (*DR*. App. H, pp. xxiii-xxiv).

When the profound ignorance, generally complete illiteracy, of the UP brahmins of the period is taken into account, this shows that the degenerate caste system had long outlived its usefulness to society — even at the very center of Hindu sanctity, Banāras. However, due to historical inertia, the institution could be abolished only by fundamental alteration of the productive mechanism — industrialization. Transient economic pressure could accomplish little. It was observed during 19th century famines that a large number of hungry people refused food cooked by members of a supposedly lower caste. A surprising number preferred death by starvation. *Census* agents reported the development of some new castes from those who had broken the tabu. Many had, without any doubt, surreptitiously broken the commensal rules under pressure of hunger, but the institution of caste was not damaged thereby. The reason was that the mass of the people reverted to their stagnant villages with archaic production, where caste was the only method known to them of preserving the group solidarity that had been their sole protection against the landlords and tax-collectors. The British only terminated certain homicidal practices by direct legal action (*DR*. 1. p.c. (appendix); 135-6, 140-1) leaving caste untouched.

Landlords managed to favour their own relatives, upper-caste tenants, and brahmins by legal chicanery: land was assigned, the tenant sued for not paying due rent, but the case was not pressed ; the tenant would thus obtain a court decision to the effect that what he paid was the proper agreed amount, and this would guarantee his tenure at low rent. Finally, a new class of people, the British collector's office bureaucrats, began to pay taxes in their own names and so register themselves as owners in place of some illiterate cultivators. This was terminated by the permanent settlements with complete registration of holdings, and frequent inspection. In pre-Bri-

tish times, however, it was easier for such a person or a tax farmer, to become owner of any piece of land that took his fancy, merely by paying taxes in his own name, provided he could then hold it by force, tribal custom, caste chicanery, or the like, against the villagers.

The feudal system was observed by many foreigners at the very time it broke down, namely the middle of the 17th century, under Aurangzeb.

"Those three countries Turkey, Persia, and Hindustan have discarded the idea of the principle 'this is mine, that is thine' (*ce Mien et ce Tien*) relatively to land and other real estate; and having lost that respect for the rights of private property, which is the basis of all that is good and useful in the world....must sooner or later experience the natural consequences of these errors — tyranny, ruin, and misery. How happy and thankful should we feel, My Lord, that in our quarter of the globe kings are not the sole proprietors of the soil ... As the ground is seldom tilled otherwise than by compulsion, and as no person is found willing and able to repair the ditches and canals for the conveyance of water, it happens that the whole country is hardly cultivated, and a great part rendered unproductive from the want of irrigation ... A profound and universal ignorance is the natural consequence of such a state of society ... It should not be inferred from the goodness of the manufactures that the workman is held in esteem or arrives at a state of independence. Nothing but sheer necessity or blows from a cudgel keep him employed; he can never become rich, and he feels it no trifling matter if he have the means of satisfying the cravings of hunger, and of covering his body with the coarsest raiment. If money be gained, it does not in any measure go into his pocket, but only serves to increase the wealth of the merchant who, in his turn, is not a little perplexed how to guard against some act of outrage and extortion on the part of his superiors (the feudal nobles) ... The Vakea-Nevis, that is to say the people whom (the Mogol) sends into the provinces to report to him upon all that passes, hold the officers a little in check — if it were not that, as happens almost always, they come to an arrangement and agree, in order to eat, greedy as they are like the others ... There is neither duchy, marquisate, nor any rich landed family that subsists by its revenues and patrimony ... The King being heir of all the goods (of the courtiers), it follows that their houses cannot subsist for long in their glory ... The sons or at least the grandsons of an Omrah find themselves often reduced after the father's death to beggary, and obliged to take service under some Omrah as simple cavalry soldiers."

This letter to Colbert (Bernier* 1.269-330; trans. 200-238) shows the reactions of a French bourgeois, who had studied the philosophy of Descartes and Gassendi, to a decayed feudalism without any real hereditary right. His own proto-bourgeoisie had come to terms with the feudal lords for a while. The *lit de justice* was still a recent memory in France, Louis XIV as seemingly absolute in his own way as Aurangzeb. But the class basis and relations of production were totally different. What the bourgeoisie appreciated most was that the merchants in France paid tolls but no taxes on profits. The very fact that Colbert could become intendant of finance shows the position of the emergent class in France. The insecurity did not prevent the rise of rich merchants in Indian port towns, which Bernier did not study. Vīrjī Vorā (Mor.* C. 153-5) of Surat was reputed to be "the richest merchant in the world", with an undisclosed fortune of millions. In 1642, the British factors at Surat tried to shake off his monopoly of trade, but he still held it four years later; indeed, the British merchants had to rely on him for financing long-term transactions, which he did willingly. Nevertheless, he was summarily jailed in 1638 by the local governor — who was summoned to the court of Delhi and removed from his post, presumably by influence of the protectors who had received gifts from the merchant prince, for there is no record of any trial anywhere. Fatehchand, whose family came from Jodhpur and who had the title of Jagat Sheth without official position in the feudal hierarchy, completely dominated the bullion-market, exchange, and hence the finances of Bengal, without control over any armed forces. The British could get nothing done without his favour in the first half of the 18th century. On the other hand, he found transactions with them so regularly profitable that he gave them loans at a rate of interest below the standard twelve percent. Transport then cost an estimated 1/2 to 3/4 rupee per seer per 100 miles, plus the cost of guards, tolls, inland customs, and other charges levied by emperor or feudal baron. Arbitrary state monopolies could be declared, or brought about by means of special taxes, such as the 33% tax in 1633 on indigo, which was the effect of making producers sell to state

agents at 18 rupees when the market price was 27 rupees. Saltpetre, which was then exported from India, was a state monopoly in 1655. Mīr Jumlā arbitrarily demanded 50,000 rupees from the grain merchants at Dacca, flogged 25,000 rupees out of their two leaders, and then received another 300,000 from the bankers of the city. Because a labourer's pay was two rupees a month or less in ports like Surat, local manufactures developed there out of sheer necessity, under the European factors. The Hindu merchant was discouraged by caste or Muslim domination from having prominent voice in affairs of state. His Muslim counterpart was somewhat more important but prone to turn into a feudal lord. Mahmūd Gāwān, of princely origin, able general, the outstanding minister and statesman of the Bāhmani kings, supported himself and his household entirely by trade upon his private fortune (*Fer.* 2.511-13) ; the income of his *jāgīr* was used to pay his troops, and the surplus expended in charity. Mīr Jumlā and other provincial governors after him abused their positions to participate in trade, either directly or by thrusting themselves as partners upon one or more merchants. This son of an oil-vendor in Isfahān had become a leading diamond merchant and mine-owner at Golkoṇḍā, feudal noble, high minister at Bijāpūr, turncoat, and Aurangzeb's general by turns. Special monopolies were claimed by such barons, goods brought in duty-free (as on the imperial service) resold for their personal gain. This imposition of feudal privilege and irresponsibility upon merchant capitalism naturally made for still greater instability. Portuguese, Dutch, French and English merchants had to arm themselves for their own protection against pirates, robbers, and each other. They inevitably began to participate in local intrigues set afoot by ambitious feudatories ; then to fight with each other and the lesser Indians. When, after Clive's victory of Plassey (1757), the East India Co. took over feudal rights in Bengal, the original policy of peaceful trade without military adventure, laid down by Thomas Roe (who saw what had happened to the Portuguese), had been abandoned in favour of a more profitable one. The Islamic ban on usury prevented Muslims from making the greatest primitive barter-accumula-

tion. Ultimately, it was the lowly Pārsī go-betweens who first turned into capitalists on the British model, followed rapidly by Hindu *dalāls* and money-lenders.

Only one further comment need be made : the merchants were not backed by workers' guilds, which had vanished centuries earlier. The money-lender flourished, but had no certainty of being able to collect from the feudal lord who borrowed. Their own associations lacked (and by caste deliberately forsook) arms such as the foreigners could wield. Shivājī twice sacked the prosperous trade-port of Surat, without interference by Mughal force, but also without being able to put to ransom the British 'factory' which had a wall and was defended with rather poor firearms that still sufficed to put off the raiders. Because it ultimately diminished production, the feudal machinery of surplus-extraction by force could not support itself ; the breakdown was complete : political, financial, administrative, and military. It remained in the Indian character, however, that the reaction during Aurangzeb's squeeze took on a religious guise, as did the original repression. Jāt, Marāthā, Rajput uprisings progressively emphasized their Hinduism, till then on good terms with Muslim rulers. The Sīkh religion assumed its military features under the last Guru Govind Singh from this very period, in order to survive. The Afghan revolt, with the various defections of Aurangzeb's own nobles, shows that the root cause was not theological. Decay of feudalism led only to increased brigandage such as ṭhuggee which, characteristically enough, contained an element of ritual human sacrifice. Thus, India was unable to develop a bourgeoisie of its own out of its particular brand of feudalism in spite of considerable primitive accumulation. The impetus had to come from outside.

10.7. It was in England, not India, that the bourgeoisie developed out of Indian gold, the vast profits of the Indian trade and later, Indian wars. This would not have been possible unless sufficient technical and political advance had been achieved to turn the primitive accumulation and barter capital into modern capital, that led to the machine and beyond. The

profits of Spain from the gold and silver of America (discovered when looking for a new route to the gold of India) only strengthened reaction (the Inquisition) and moribund feudalism ; Portugal hardly fared better from its Eastern trade. The Dutch did progress, but the pressure of Spain and France by land and England by sea was fatal. France was a hundred years too late with its bourgeois revolution. In England alone were the necessary conditions satisfied. When the question of giving capital aid to backward countries like India, Pakistan, Burma, Ceylon, Indonesia, Malaya or the Belgian Congo is examined, the substantial capital aid received from them by Europe, in the form of goods paid for far below its value, should be taken into consideration.

It has been pointed out by industrious scholars that the Turks had dreams of conquering India during the 16th century; it is added that the history of India might have been entirely different, had the Turkish empire possessed shipbuilding timber on the Red Sea, like its Mediterranean provinces. This is the same type of historical philosophy that speculates upon changes that might have followed in world history, had Cleopatra's nose been an inch longer. The Turks could easily have cleared the ancient Pharaonic canal from the Red sea to a branch of the Nile — as was done by Darius I. That it was not done in spite of ample manpower simply indicates the cessation of their own progress. The class basis for a bourgeois-colonial expansion was absent. No Turkish Marco Polos or missionaries are known. The Persian Nadir Shah's raid into India (A.D. 1739) left no residue, for the same reason. The change from one oriental feudalism to another was only on the surface. On the other hand, the process that had begun with the rise of Magadha, but interrupted by feudalism, was inverted by the British East India Company : Instead of the state becoming the greatest trader, the greatest trading organization took over the state.

On the military level, the difference between the feudal and bourgeois modes was reflected in better equipment, far superior loyalty, efficiency, discipline and morale, for reasons that are known but rarely emphasized. The British conquered

and held the country with an Indian army, paid from India's resources. Indian feudal armies of the 17th and 18th centuries often hired European drill-sergeants and artillery experts. The crucial difference was that the British fed their men properly and paid all their soldiers regularly in cash every month, in war and peace, without peculation by the pay-clerks, or withholding by the commanders. The Frenchman, Tavernier (*Travels in India*, trans. V. Ball, 2 vol. London 1889), a feudal noble but also a jewel-merchant wrote :

"One hundred of our European soldiers would scarcely have any difficulty in vanquishing 1000 of these Indian soldiers (of Aurangzeb's bodyguard) ; but it is true on the other hand, that they would have much difficulty in accustoming themselves to so abstemious a life as theirs. For the horseman as well as infantry soldier supports himself with a little flour kneaded with water and black sugar, of which they make small balls ; and in the evening, whenever they have the necessaries, they make *khichri*, which consists of rice cooked with a grain of the above name (*sic*) in water with a little salt. When eating it, they first dip the ends of their fingers in melted butter, and such is the ordinary food of both soldiers and poor people. To which it should be added that the heat would kill our soldiers, who would be unable to remain in the sun throughout the day as these Indians do." (1.390) ... "On the 11th September, all the *Frank* gunners went to the Nawab's tent (Mir Jumla, after the siege of Gandikot) crying out that they had not been paid the four month's wages that had been promised, and that if they were not paid they would go to take service elsewhere, upon which the Nowab put them off till the following day. On the 12th, the gunners not having omitted to repair to the tent of the Nawab, he ordered them to be paid for three months, and promised them at the close of the current month to pay the fourth. They had no sooner received this money than they treated one another, and the *balandines* (dancing girls) carried off more than half of it." (1.228-9).

With the later Peshwās, (as with any ruler in later feudalism from below) the reaction to a general's victories was to stop further supplies lest he become too powerful. The Sikh rulers after Ranjit Singh distrusted their followers so completely that they regularly abandoned the field that had been won from the British in pitched battle. The British navy pressed its sailors even after Trafalgar and paid them little, but that payment was made

upon reaching the home port, and the disabled and dependents of those killed in service were compensated ; moreover, prize money was honestly shared out in a fixed proportion. The British also paid for all supplies acquired during the march, or for the barracks. With them war was just another business proposition whose expenses, profits, and risks had been estimated — in cash. This and judicious bribery, playing off one Indian feudal war-lord against another, enabled Clive to win the battle of Plassey with a diminutive contingent of his own. Four years later (A.D. 1761) a Marāṭhā army was annihilated at Pānipat in a pitched battle against the forces led by the Afghan king Ahmad Shah Durrānī. The winner's soldiers mutinied after the battle because they had not been paid for years. The Marāṭhās foraged by looting the helpless countryside through their Peṇḍhārī irregulars. Feudal chiefs had rarely enough money in hand to execute serious campaigns which did not yield immediate cash profits in loot and ransom. Aurangzeb had taken over most of his father's treasury, filled with the accumulation of a long and peaceful reign ; but he was hard put to it to maintain his forces and pay the administrative officers five years after the war of succession. Moreover, this fabulous treasure of Shah Jahān amounted to no more than 60 million rupees in cash, the throne, jewels, elephants, &c. being of no use for payment of current expenditure.

The British, after a brief period of feudal loot in Bengal, had to settle down to bourgeois methods of exploitation. It was purely a question of bookkeeping and expenses. At Banāras, for example, the management was at first left to the indebted rājā, who could not gather enough revenue to meet both his debt and the expenses of collection. The British kept better accounts, suppressed most graft and extortion, needed much less force, hence made far more profit, without augmentation of dues :

"In many instances Resident had found a common summons, carried by a single peon sufficient.... (whereas the former Rājā Balvant Singh had been) obliged to make constant use of Horse or Foot to overawe his turbulent subjects and to realize his collec-

tions, frequently going himself for that purpose at their head and making constant circuits through his territories." (*DR.* 1.45).

The same source informs us that a single attendant now sufficed to give pestige to the tax-collector. Moreover, when the district was disturbed, a simple route march with 100 soldiers under a Captain Boujounier restored order, without firing a shot. The expenditure was further reduced when it was realized that the feudal zamindars, created by the East India Company for purpose of tax-collection, meant a guarantee of extortionate, new ownership rights to a class that had never held them. A report of 1820 said :

"If the present system is retained, business will continue to accumulate greatly, no matter what individual exertions are made ....Were the landed tenures to be placed upon a proper footing, and due precautions taken against future aggression, one-third at least of our police and judicial establishments might be, with safety, and advantage to the country, abolished." (*Selections from revenue records, NWP* ; Allahabad 1873).

The question "who owns the land?" could not be answered because ownership had totally different meanings under Indian feudalism and the European bourgeois or proto-bourgeois mode. The 'lumberdars', held responsible for payment of taxes, soon found it possible to claim ownership rights of the new type, though they had only been representatives of the commune. The answer, therefore, lay in the creation of a new type of guaranteed property in land, essentially bourgeois property under various traditional outward forms. This was not accomplished at one stroke ; but it WAS done, irrevocably. Later feudal tax-collection had degenerated into plunder of the cultivators, without protection except such little as might derive from their communal solidarity behind ancient custom (*FOM.* 1.378-80). The new revenue settlement resulted in direct assessment and taxation of the owner class whose possession was subject to the same laws as other personal property, and could be transferred by a financial transaction as for trade goods. The rights were maintained by an efficient judiciary and a compact police force, both paid regular salaries, independent of any feudal nobility, with the same powers over all

classes of people as regards the law — bourgeois law.

The considerable hiatus caused by the British conquest in the steady development of the Indian bourgeoisie has to be taken into account. It was not the merchant princes, financiers, monopolists of the late feudal period who turned into the new Indian bourgeois. They were neatly cleaned out as soon as the feudal governors in whose shadow they had carried out their lucrative practices were supplanted by the British. The greatest Indian merchants had, after a while, hindered the East India Company's profits. They had no powerful workers' guilds, no political control over the armed forces, no public opinion behind them. There was no reason why they should be allowed any longer to interfere with the Company's rapacious agents, who took over every profitable feudal monopoly from salt to land revenue, as well as imports and exports. In England, the East India Company and its merchants were superseded by the new industrialists and financiers of the industrial revolution. But this was not forced expropriation, rather amalgamation with new dominant partners, upon a new basis of machine manufacture. In India, those who had profited by the first equal trade with the East India Company underwent a complete eclipse; many had to become relatively unimportant landlords. The new class that rose in the second half of the 19th century — after the last upsurge of feudalism in the 1857 Mutiny had been suppressed — developed out of the go-between *dalāls*, who were ultimately based on machine production, but production mostly in England, supplied by India with raw materials and a market. The Indian precapitalist accumulation could not give rise immediately to mechanisation nor to an advanced proletariat as had the British in England. Machines, technique, and the first technicians had to be imported. This accounts mainly for India's backwardness, where people who talk of the atomic age rub elbows with fellow-countrymen still in the tribal state.

Notes and references:

1. These characteristics are quoted from Marion Gibbs; *Feudal Order* ("A study of the origins and development of English feudal society"); 'Past & Present Series', no. 8, London 1947.

2. The quotations are mainly from the third book (especially chapters 17 and 27) of *The book of Ser Marco Polo* (Trans. H. Yule, supplemented by that of Marsden for book IV); ed. G. B. Parks, New York 1927. Only for the passage at the end of section 10.1 have I translated directly from the rugged prose of Polo's original *Il Milione*, using the critical edition of Luigi Foscolo Benedetto, Firenze 1928. The English version is ultimately based, through G. B. Ramusio's *Navigazioni et Viaggi* upon the Latin of Fra Francesco Pipino of Bologna, who began his work when Polo was still living at Venice. The sense is not fundamentally changed, so the available version has been quoted for convenience of those who would like to read more for themselves. Moreover, the essential differences also go back to a Polian source (Benedetto, *intr.* p. clxix).

3. What follows in this section is an abstract of my *Origins of feudalism in Kaśmīr* (*JBBRAS.* 150th anniversary volume, Bombay 1956).

4. The *Pṛthvī-rāja Rāso* in Rājasthānī was published as no. 4 of the *Nāgarī Pracāriṇī Sabhā's granthamālā* (Banāras, 1904). The Sanskrit *Pṛthvī-rāja-vijaya*, probably by the Kaśmīrian poet Jayānaka ('between 1178 and 1200', H. B. Sārdā, *JRAS.* 1913, 261) was edited with the commentary of Jonarāja by G. H. Ojhā and C. Sharmā Guleri (Ajmer 1941). The Sanskrit seems to be nearer the inscriptions and known data than the current inflated vernacular lay, which outdoes the Sanskrit in stupidity and diffuseness. The original, if recovered, will appear in the Rājasthān Series published by the Rājasthān Purātattva Mandir, Jaipūr.

5. Published by G. H. Ojhā in *JASB.* 23, 1927 (Num. Supplement XL, 14-18); reading Śrī Boppa in 8th century characters; perhaps Kāla Bhoja of Nāgḍā 734-753 A.D. But see *EI.* 30, p. 4, pp. 8-9.

6. Tod's *Annals of Rājasthān* (1st ed. London 1829; popular ed., 2 vol. London 1914) gives a very sympathetic treatment of Rajput tradition, mostly from the *rāsos* and representatives then living. The error is in thinking that the military hierarchy etc. sufficed to constitute feudalism.

7. The details will be found in *BJ*, *MEI*, *DR*, Grierson's careful *NDG*, and the many 'District settlement reports' that deserve a long series of studies by themselves. For the Mirās tenure of Mahārāṣṭra, see W. Chaplin: *Report* (of the commissioner in the Deccan; Bombay 1824), pp. 31-2; 56-73.

8. *Voyages de François Bernier*, 2 vol. Amsterdam 1709-10. The author was a doctor of medicine of the faculty of Montpellier, and what is far more important, pupil and last companion of Pierre Gassendi. His discussion of Aurangzeb's state (les états du Grand Mogol) is coloured by a fine bourgeois prejudice, but fundamentally correct in spite of the unconscious theorizing. Some of it misled Marx and Engels, as the conditions in the port-cities were entirely different from those at Delhi or Agra, which Bernier knew best as personal physician to the

Agā Dāniśmand Khān, a commander of 5000 (*panj hazāri*) for the emperor. The translation *Travels in the Mogul empire, A.D.* 1656-1668, by A. Constable, revised by Vincent Smith (Oxford 1914), lacks the flavour of the original.

9. The studies of W. H. Moreland in Muslim administration may be particularly recommended: A) *The agrarian system of Moslem India* (Cambridge, 1929) where the varying meaning of terms, or different terminology of various reigns is duly studied, and a careful attempt made at standardization that would not be possible for the ordinary reader from the sources or translations. B) *India at the death of Akbar* (London 1920). C) *From Akbar to Aurangzeb;* 'A study in Indian economic history' (London 1923). For the general development of the economy of Bengal at the end of the Mughal period, cf. Kālinīkiṅkar Datta: *Studies in the history of the Bengal subah* vol. I (Calcutta University, 1936); S. Bhaṭṭāchārya: *The East Indian Company and the economy of Bengal from* 1704 *to* 1740 (London 1954). The economic and sociological condition of the single village of Badlāpūr 42 miles from Bombay on the rail route to Poona has been studied with admirable patience (though unjustified theorizing about the origins of cults &c.) by N. G. Chāpekar in his Marāṭhī book *Badlāpūr* (Poona, 1933). This work should be followed up by a post-war report on the same village, to investigate further disruption by outside commodity production.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES AND CORRECTIONS.

p. 4, line 23: read 'had' for 'has'.

(p. 99). The injunction in the ritual book (10.4) of Hiraṇyakeśin-Satyāṣāḍha that Kaṇvas and Kaśyapas should not be given sacrificial gifts parallels a modern disbarment whose historical origin is not in doubt. The Śākadvīpīya brahmins of Bihār are not fed at the *śrāddha* feast for the manes, though others lower in the scale may be feasted (G. A. Grierson, in *IA.* 17.273). These excluded brahmins may be traced back to the sun-worshipping Magians imported (*Sāmba-purāṇa* 26) during the Scythian period into Multan (p. 315) and thence diffused or gathering others to their cult. It seems most plausible that the great Varāhamihira was descended from these Magian brahmins. The termination *mihira* could hardly be explained otherwise. The god MIIRO or MIORO for MIHR occurs frequently on Indo-Scythian coins, while Varāhamihira dedicates his work to the sun-god and calls the priests of the Sun, Magas (*Bṛhatsaṃhitā* 60.19).

(p. 121-2). The oldest *nāga* tutelary demon subdued by any hero seems to be Kāliya, at Mathurā, whom Kṛṣṇa wrestled down, but did not kill. Fa Hian reported that the Samkasya monastery had a special chamber for serving food ceremonially to the guardian *nāga*. The brahmins recovered from the first onset of Buddhism in Kaśmīr by taking over the local *nāga* cults which had withered under the monks' doctrine. The Maṇināga-peṭha mentioned in inscriptions from the 6th century (e.g. Fleet 25) refers to a *nāga* whose cult still survives (*EI.* 28.328-334). The *Navasāhasāṅka-carita* shows the predecessors of Bhoja at Dhārā doing reverence to local patron *nāgas* and marrying *Nāga* princesses.

p. 124, line 8, the actual reading is *kukura*, but the meaning is the same. In the *Mbh.*, the tribe seems to be mentioned as a branch of the Yadus while the eponymous ancestor is son of Andhaka, which is the Pāli form of Āndhra. Line 17, read 'clan' for 'class'.

(p. 157-8). Not even the bull-calves could be slaughtered profitably, because many oxen, beyond those used in ploughing, were needed for transport, either hitched to carts, or for the pack-caravans. This gave a secure economic for the tabu. Male buffaloes are too sluggish to be used profitably in transport over long distances.

(p. 159). The term 'value' is used here in the abstract sense of the economists who now say that value is measured by socially necessary labour time, but also distinguish between surplus value, use-value, exchange-value, and value in the abstract sense. This type of analysis could not be expected when food production was new. But the feeling that any social action (good or bad) on the part of the individual would create (for him) some abstract merit or demerit, could surely be felt in any food-producing society. This describes *karma*.

p. 163, line 26, read 'Every' for Eevery'.

(p. 189). *Arth.* 13.5 advises the king to placate newly conquered people by "offering due reverence to the local deities, *samājas,* and *vihāras* (*deśa-daivata-samājotsava-vihāreṣu ca bhaktim anuvarteta*)". So, the *samāja* had to be respected; the abolition by Asoka went against all precedent and previous exercise of royal power.

(p. 203). Varāhamihira in his *Bṛhatsaṃhitā* mentions the Kukura (5.71; 14.4; 32.22) tribe and region, so that they may have survived to that date. He also refers to the Kurus, including the utopian northern Kurus, so that the actual existence of the tribes in his day cannot be taken as proved. In any case, he does not know the Licchavis, in spite of the Gupta queen (p. 290).

(p. 265). This may be compared also to the position of the Greek language and studies in ancient Rome, from the last days of the Republic to the age of the Antonines, and even later. The rhetor trained students to argue upon fantastic themes drawn mostly from Greek mythology, at a period when the courts of Rome were full of the most varied and interesting cases. The lack of imagination, paucity of "respectable" material, and inability to look upon real life bear a startling resemblance to the pandit's attitude, and for similar reasons. That the language was associated with a class is no reason for neglecting its study; but current proposals to make Sanskrit compulsory would be fatal.

(p. 271-2). Far older than the Karagā is the traditional pot-worship (*ghaṭa-sthāpanā*) on the first day of Āśvin (October new moon), which begins a nine-day festival at the time crops ripen for the harvest. These days (the *navarātra*) are specially dedicated to the worship of all mother-goddesses. On the eighth, sacrifice (now innocuous) must be offered to Sarasvatī. The villagers still have their annual procession of decorated bulls this time of the year, though the beasts are no longer sacrificed.

(p. 278-9). The latest available English translation of Fa-Hsien seems to be in *Chinese Literature* (1956.3.153-181). The important differences in the passage cited are: "The people are rich and contented, unencumbered by any poll-tax or official restrictions .... The king's attendants, guards, and retainers all receive emoluments and pensions... After Buddha's Nirvana, the kings, elders, and lay Buddhists built monasteries for the monks and provided them with houses, gardens, and fields, with husbandmen and cattle to cultivate them. Title deeds inscribed on iron were handed down. ..." (pp. 154-5). On p. 155, we learn of the performance of monastic plays, of which the *Śāriputra-prakaraṇa* (fragments discovered in Central Asia) may be identified, and which leads us to believe that similar plays existed about Moggallāna and Kaśyapa. The ruin of the cities had already begun: "This city (of Gayā) is desolate and completely deserted" (p. 170).

(p. 291). A terra-cotta seal found at Basārh (*JBORS.* 5.303; *Ann. Rep. Arch. Sur. India,* 1903-4, plate 40), the ancient Vaiśālī, seems to

belong to this queen. It gives her name in the exact form of the lost play, as Dhruvasvāminī. If the *Bhaviṣyottara-purāṇa* quotations given by some (e.g. M. Krishnamachariar, *Hist. Classical Skt. Literature*, Madras-Poona 1937, intr. pp. cii-civ) could be verified, preferably in a critical edition from all the extant manuscripts, we should learn a bit more about the Guptas; but the passages are of extremely doubtful authenticity, even for a purāṇa.

(p. 294). Payment by barter or in services instead of cash is still relatively high in India. A national sample survey (of doubtful range) estimates this (*INDIA*.1956.99) as 40% for all goods consumed, but 43% in the rural and 11% in the urban areas.

(p. 298, 300). For a single plot, the income would be whatever the brahmin could get out of it by personal or indirect cultivation. When the entire village was granted, the income was fixed so far as the payment to the grantee, instead of the state, went. However, the right to make the terms for any new settlers in the waste land, or to cultivate any portion of the waste directly, vested in the donees, and were not only a constant source of new profit but also a model for the later feudal tenure (p. 352).

(p. 302-3; 343). The tactics of guerrilla warfare were neatly employed by Haidar Ali against the East India Company's troops. When Col. Wood tried to entice him to battle by a letter which pointed out how disgraceful it was for a great prince to fly before a detachment of infantry and a few pieces of cannon, Haidar replied briefly: "...You will in time understand my mode of warfare. Shall I risk my cavalry, which cost a thousand rupees each horse, against your cannon ball which cost two pice? No! I will march your troops until their legs swell to the size of their bodies. You shall not have a blade of grass, nor a drop of water. I will hear of you every time your drum beats, but you shall not know where I am once a month. I will give your army battle, but it must be when I please, and not when you choose." (*FOM*.2.300-1). The promise was faithfully kept. When Haidar finally attacked, the exhaustion and the surprise were so effective that Wood's entire force would have been wiped out, but for unexpected reinforcements in the very nick of time. Rapid movement and avoidance of pitched battles except when the terrain was favourable and surprise attacks feasible, characterized the most successful Marāṭhā warfare.

(p. 338). The position of trade and commodity production in feudalism from below may be seen by a glance at the structure of the Vijayanagar empire. The major chiefs (of Seringapatam, Bankapur, Gersoppa, Calicut, Bhatkal, Bakanur) were virtually independent, except that they had to pay regular cash tribute, and to maintain a fixed quota each of armed forces. The center, on the other hand, had to be strong enough to collect the tribute, for the feudatory contingents would be turned against a weak emperor while almost every little Nāyak then tried to become a rājā. Therefore, the emperor — like the Delhi sultans — had to administer

a certain domain personally, as if he were himself the greatest of the barons. The revenues and their convertibility into gold depended upon heavy trade, with control of the ports. This too was true of Delhi, where the Lodi sultans had to revert to collecting their assessments in kind whenever the ports of Gujarat and Bengal were not in their possession, and the supply of bullion consequently cut off. The last toll-gate (at Hospet) on the great road from the west-coast ports to the capital at Vijayanagar was farmed out for 12,000 *pardãos* a year. The great adjacent tank and its waterworks brought in another 20,000; the rest of the annual revenue of that locality amounted to less than 10,000 *pardãos*. Moreover, a good deal of this gain was counteracted by royal hoarding (as Marco Polo noted of the Pāṇḍyas), which prevented the deposited treasure of any king from being unsealed by his successors. Too little of the revenue found its way back into useful circulation through the construction of essential works like reservoirs and canals. The temples added nothing to progress, in spite of their separate, considerable revenues from royal endowments and the harlot-dancing-girls. The ruin of Vijayanagar in 1565 was a great disaster for the Portuguese, who had a monopoly of the most lucrative portion of that trade, namely the import of horses and bullion, against the export of fine cloth and spices. The Muslims had always been rivals and enemies of the Portuguese on the high seas, and for mastery of the ports (including Goa), so that trade with them was excluded. This pinch made the strengthening of the Inquisition in Goa easy, further embittering relations with both Hindus and Muslims. The decline of Portugal as a great power was completed by the strength of Spain on land, and Holland and England on the seas, but its main impetus came from the sudden fall of Vijayanagar and the loss of trade with the great Hindu kingdom which had controlled the greater portion of the Indian peninsula.

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